Rhapsodes of Social Science: Herodotus' Performance of *Politeic* Inquiry

by

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Submitted in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree
Master of Arts

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To J.:
by far, I believe, the fairest of women.

You touch me to the heart, Socrates, by what you say, and I believe it is by divine dispensation that good poets interpret these messages to us from the gods.

And you rhapsodes then interpret the messages of the poets?

That's right too.

So you are interpreters of interpreters?

Just so.

Plato *Ion* 535

For the great Idea, the idea of perfect and free individuals,
For that, the bard walks in advance, leader of leaders,
The attitude of him cheers up slaves and horrifies foreign
despots.

Without extinction is Liberty, without retrograde is Equality,
They live in the feelings of young men and the best women,
(Not for nothing have the indomitable heads of the earth
been always ready to fall for Liberty.)

For the great Idea,
That, O my brethren, that is the mission of poets.

Walt Whitman, "By Blue Ontario's Shore," (vss. 10-11) *Leaves Of Grass*

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

For encouragement, financial support, trust, demands, advice, rewards, patience, scorn, example, insult, respect, generosity, kindness, care and enduring love, thanks are due to

- the Thesis Committee members: William Mathie, Leah Bradshaw, Ingrid Makus, Alan Arthur and Norma Thompson;

- the Politics Department, especially Pierre Lizee, Gerald Dirks, Terrance Carroll, Charles Burton, Marc James, Cheryl Collier, Paul Hamilton, Jacqueline Krikorian, Nick Baxter-Moore and Fran Meffe;

- the Ontario Graduate Scholarship Committee, Government of Ontario Ministry of Education and Training;

- my mentors from Saint Thomas University, Fredericton, N.B., especially Patrick Malcolmson, Richard Myers, Jim Reither, Russ Hunt, and Alan Mason;

- my seminar students in Politics 2F90, 3P01, 3P71 and 1P92, from 1997 to 1999;

- Brock University, especially the staff of the James A. Gibson Library, and Ellie Koop

- my graduate student peers, my fellows, my friends and my family.

I beg pardon of those I have neglected to mention. May gods and heroes view me kindly.

ABSTRACT

Herodotus' *logos* represents many examples of the relationship between political and paradigmatic authority, and the synthesis of these examples in a community characterized by free and equal speech. Herodotus' walkabout narrator sets forth an inquiry into knowledge-seeking he extends the *isegoria* principle from Athenian politics to the broader world. The *History* demonstrates (a) various modes of constructing meaning, (b) interacting notions of how people have lived and living questions as to how we ought to live, and (c) an investigation of the nature and limits of human knowledge. Representing diverse wisdom, publicly and privately discovered and presented, Herodotus sets forth Solon's wise advice and law-making, the capital punishment of the learned Anacharsis, the investigative outrages of Cambyses and Psammetichus' more pious experiments. Their stories challenge and complement their communities' characters – the relative constraint under which the Egyptians and Persians make their investigations, the Scythians' qualified openness and the relative fearlessness and freedom in which the Greeks set forth their inquiries.

Setting forth the investigator-storykeeper as a poetic historian, Herodotus shows that history as poetry thwarts natural decay by allowing custom to be reformed in an open milieu, and thus win through and survive. Despite the potential dangers that openness shares with tyranny, Herodotus' inquiry sets up a contest of world-views in which it is mutability that openness affords a community that ensures its survival.

First Person Singular

> You ask me how I write. This is how I write. I get rid of the lizard. I eschew the philosopher's stone. I bury my girlfriend. I remove my personality from the line so that I am permitted to use the first person as often as I wish without offending my appetite for modesty.[1]

To evaluate the superiority of the Greek type in Herodotus' *History*, we engage knowledge seekers in the context of their national communities. Their endeavours in turn inform our sense of Herodotus' performance of his own inquiries (*historiēs apodexis*). Bound by and yet challenging convention, Herodotus' seekers represent a more detailed development of Herodotus as investigator (*histōr*). We will keep in mind the relative constraint under which the Persians and Egyptians make their investigations, the Scythians' qualified openness and the relative fearlessness and freedom in which the Greeks set forth their inquiries. Parallel to this pattern is the exclusivity that animates the investigator and the inclusivity that characterizes the storykeeper (*logios*). In each case, we will uncover the complex and not untroubled enterprise of these poets and engineers of knowledge.

Implicit in all this are the questions, of what value is an Herodotean supplement to Plato's Socrates, and of what value is an historical alternative to classical political philosophy. It is not inappropriate to believe that the relationship between the wisdom of particular individuals and that of their communities was uppermost among the concerns of both Plato's Socrates and Herodotus' first-person narrator, as they attended to knowledge and opinion within the horizons of belief, custom and law. The metaphor of walkabout wisdom, publicly and privately discovered and presented, sets forth Solon's wise advice and law-making, the

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1Leonard Cohen, "I bury my girlfriend" in *Stranger Music* (Toronto: McLelland & Stewart, 1993), 245.

capital punishment of the learned Anacharsis, the investigative outrages of Cambyses and Psammetichus' more pious experiments. Their stories participate in and represent Herodotus' *logos*.

Chapter One acknowledges my place in this investigation and presentation. Chapter Two develops a working genre of the *History*. With these foundations Chapter Three sets out methodological approaches based on a detailed image of the Herodotean investigator-storykeeper, showing how this methodology encompasses Herodotus' investigative roles and epistemology. Taking a clue from the active role that interpretation plays in the access to the experiences and understandings of others, we consider seekers through the participant observation of Herodotus' narrator gathering the various aspects of the curious storyteller's craft from the sources he engages. Within this framework, Chapters Four and Five consider the modes of constructing meaning by distinctive figures in the *History*'s four main national communities. Interpretating the Greek seeker as an amalgam of the other seekers, Chapter Five serves as a conclusion on the superiority of free and equal investigative speech as a paradigm of vital social science.

In attempting to articulate Herodotus' thought we set forth our own. The *History* repeatedly places this fact before its audience. In trying to account for Herodotus' narrated world, we give an account of ourselves as individuals and as members of communities interacting with the people and places in the *History*. We engage archetypes of curious persons in the context of multiple communities and place ourselves in their midst. If Herodotus' students learn anything, it must be that they essay in miniature what Herodotus himself attempts on a grand scale: to set forth to an audience the results of their inquiries. In some small way, just as Herodotus' manages his sources and stories consistent with the necessity of

his *logos*, so must his students undertake a small-scale Heraclean labour of investigation and engagement.[2] The degree to which audiences of Herodotus' narrative are his fellow interrogators, inspectors and interpreters, depends largely on their willing investment in Herodotus' account and a certain willing suspension of disbelief. If we allow his account to transport us, Herodotus' *History* places us as if there in the middle of the earth as known to Greek antiquity. This engagement is undeniably part of the imaginative and critical project into which our author draws us. Any commentator or student who writes and speaks about the *History* must engage the text with openness to Herodotus' overt self-awareness.

Herodotus' presence in the *History* is twin with the commentator's presence in the commentary through a reportage strategy that positions the story-teller, the logios, at a distance from unambiguous truth-claims about the account. In addition to Herodotus' many sources being themselves story-keepers and storytellers, a variety of personae also don the mantle of investigator. In particularly radicalized cases the threat that inquiry poses to traditional horizons and established orthodoxies is made plain. Is there a commensurate danger inherent in a Master of Arts, where "mastery" is a kind of violence, not merely to the phenomena under investigation but to the horizons within which they and the investigator must live?[3]

Noting particular usage as clues to the narrative levels at work in Herodotus, Rosaria Vignolo Munson marries philological and interpretative approaches to the *History*. She shows

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2Seth Benardete, *Herodotean Inquiries* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1970), 1, 3.

3R. V. Munson, "The Madness of Cambyses," *Arethusa* 24 (1991): 59. C.f. W. R. Connor, "The Histōr in History," in *Nomodeikes: Studies in Honor of Martin Ostwald.* eds. R. M. Rosen and J. Farrell (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993). Radical cases include e.g. Persian king Cambyses (Herodotus *History* 3.31-37) and the Lydian usurper Gyges (Hdt. *Hist.* 1.18-12).

that Herodotus' elaborate narrative strategy includes the co-investigator role that Herodotus' audience plays with the investigator and storykeeper personae throughout the *History*. In this way, our author invests the given material with meaning without destroying it or the horizons of which it is a part. The complex relationships among the various participants - teacher, student, storyteller, investigator - is part and parcel of the inviting performance of an open, teaching inquiry. We must therefore, from the outset, add a wrinkle to what will emerge as a "doubleness" in Herodotus' account, and thus in our appreciation of him. Beyond even the power of Herodotus' account to perform "in such a way that we not only understand how the characters in the story understood themselves, but also how Herodotus understood them," there lies the understanding of an eclectic audience of participating observers.[4] Herodotus' openness to multiple accounts shows an artistic abandonment at ease with relinquishing a certain amount of control over his narrative artifact.

Herodotus demonstrates his engagement with the necessity of his logos. Recognizing that the performance is for an audience, students must show similar self-awareness in their commentary. Thus, I offer my own a mission statement:

> I, Herodotus of Halicarnassus, am here setting forth my history, that time may not draw the color from what man [ex anthrōpōn] has brought into being, nor those great and wonderful deeds, manifested by both Greeks and barbarians, fail of their report, and, together with all this, the reason why they fought one another. (Herodotus, *History*, 1.1)

> I am not going to say about these matters [the instigation of Greek-barbarian conflict] that they were thus or thus, but I will go forward in my account, covering alike the small and great cities of mankind, since I know that man's good fortune never abides in the same place. (Hdt. *Hist.*, 1.5, edited)

> To the degree that I have spoken of them [divine matters], it was with but a

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4 Benardete, 4.

touch, and under stress of necessity, that I have spoken. (2.65)[5]

Herodotus' proem serves as a model for my mission statement:

I, Jonathan of Fredericton, am here setting forth my investigation, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for a Master of Arts degree from Brock University, that time may not draw the colour from what scholarship has brought into being, nor my studies, manifested in both Graduate and bachelor schools, fail of their report, and, together with all this, the reason why Herodotus' *History* repays students of political philosophy.

Although this mission statement does not warrant the ink spent in expanding Herodotus', some clarification of its elements is needed. Although the writer cannot be described entirely, he is always present in the narrative act. The audience is also perpetually present, and contributes by its presence to the character of the performance. The charge that Herodotus merely means to please obscures the importance of reception in any performed endeavour. We must be suspicious of the notion that entertaining disallows teaching. My document and its presentation, this shared act, aims at certification and thus must abide by the protocols of certification. To ignore this basic condition would present a naive attempt to "set forth inquiries." The performative relationships and the role of pleasing in gaining recognition must not be forgotten.[6]

This exercise addresses relevant Herodotean scholarship and a complex component: "my studies." The brief intellectual history that brings me to Herodotus is perhaps eclectic and unusual. The relevance of such a genealogy may be suspect; this is a fair suspicion. So-called self-awareness can lead to a kind of academic confession that clouds an otherwise precise and

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5 Unless otherwise noted, internal references are to book and chapter of Herodotus, *The History*, trans. David Grene (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988).

6 Gregory Nagy, "Herodotus the *logios*," *Arethusa* 20 (1987), 175-176; Barry Pomeroy, "A Mad Trapper's Report on Reader Response and Reception Theory," (M.A. Thesis, University of New Brunswick, 1994), 7. Q.v. B. Pomeroy, "Sample of M.A. Thesis," available from **http://home.cc.umanitoba.ca/~pomeroy/academic/** thesis.html; Internet.

interesting account with emotive anecdotes or *ad hominem* arguments. This exploitation of dual and even polyvalent narrative modes, however, is in keeping with Herodotus' own methods.[7] Placing anecdotal accounts side by side with rigorous inquiry acknowledges the horizons and preserves the interpretive space in which the inquiry takes place.

I am willing to take this confessional risk because Herodotus demands it. The awareness of which I am capable, if verging on confessional, is in keeping with Herodotus' attention to the act of narration. Herodotus' biographers openly acknowledge the limits of their attempts, and yet are compelled to try and draw him from his own text and from whatever other sources they can. Even the few facts agreed upon concerning Herodotus – his birthplace, grave-site and recitations in Athens – must be qualified. "So much may be reasonably taken as certain. Beyond it we know very little; there is a large field for conjecture, and scholars have not hesitated to expatiate it."[8] If Herodotus were less omnipresent in his text, the paucity of recorded details about the 'father of history' would be less bothersome, but also less interesting. Herodotus demands that we attend to his first-person narrative persona, itself a creation of the author, and position its teachings among those of many story-keepers, and attend also to our own logios-histōr character.

My discovery of Herodotus was not through the study of classics or ancient history, but through negotiating an emerging interest in language and meaning with the problem of unity and diversity at its centre. Interpretive ethnography and political philosophy lay at the center of my undergraduate interests. Recovering for students of the social sciences what seems to have

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7 Stewart Flory, *The Archaic Smile of Herodotus* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1987), 23-24, 27.

8 A. D. Godley, trans., "Introduction," in *Herodotus*, vol. 1, *Loeb Classical Library*, ed. T. E. Page (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1960), vii-viii.

long animated students of literature, Clifford Geertz sums up the tension that drove me to Herodotus:

> That the writing of ethnography involves telling stories, making pictures, concocting symbolism, and deploying tropes is commonly resisted, often fiercely, because of a confusion, endemic in the West since Plato at least, of the imagined with the imaginary, the fictional with the false, making things out with making them up.[9]

Presented to me as a proto-ethnography in the context of political philosophy, Herodotus' *History* resurfaced as a meeting ground of issues in 'pedagogical epistemology' (accounts of human understanding relative to learning and teaching), a text so rich in possibilities as to be almost overwhelming. Herodotus proved too comprehensive within the context of my undergraqduate ethnographic lexicon; thus the need to redefine for myself the discipline of anthropology by supplementing its language with that of political philosophy. The attraction of Herodotus that I early recognized, however, kept hidden the dynamics of the recurring question of his method and its relationship to the recurring question of language and meaning. The important precursor to engaging the text of the *History* is a study of its method as an account and as a demonstration of modes of constructing meaning. Its historical method is its mode of teaching and learning. The narrator personae and narrative genres through which such an inquiry is represented are properly the prior problem of the *History*. Trying to grapple with these "genre and meaning" issues demanded I eschew much of the material-historical scholarship and focus rather on the study of narrative interpretation; I could not understand, however much I sensed, the relationship, in modern terms, between political philosophy and epistemology.[10]

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9 Clifford Geertz, *Works and Lives* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1988), 140

10 James Danford, *Wittgenstein and Political Philosophy*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 14, 199-200.

A work-placement and cultural exchange experience in post civil strife Mali, West Africa, further entrenched my sense that Herodotus' concerns - cultural identity, understanding conflict, adaptation and imperialism - were also contemporary ones. The possibility, though problematic, of representing 'others' and alternative notions, and interpreting these differences in ways which create meaningful accounts for us challenges mere intellectualism with the basic need to live and to act in a world that encompasses multiple modes of meaning. Herodotus' concern with *aitia* - reasons and responsibilities for conflicts - leads me to ask what place political philosophy has in the realm of the human sciences' paradigms.

In addition to reasoning through the Graeco-Persian conflict and saving great deeds from ignomy, Herodotus preserves a place where we discover questions and stories from which his audiences may draw important lessons. Willing to report for the record that which he disbelieves suspects or cannot account for fully, Herodotus' commitment to preservation does not spring from the actuality of stories. Despite this, he recognizes the fertility of many stories to allow for learning. His main aim is to provide loci of interpretation, "a fabric of fables, the moral of which is very appropriate for the human heart."[11]

The question of free and equal investigative speech required a certain intellectual archeology. When we look at Herodotus from within the tradition of ethnography the question of *nomos* presents itself as the Herodotean problem, particularly in the context of the *History*'s place in the midst of the nature-convention dualism that animated fifth-century sophistry.[12]

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11 Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Emile*, trans. Alan Bloom (New York: Basic Books, 1979), 156. Cited in Benardete, frontispiece, on Hdt. 1.94.

12 Archaelus [sections 542, 545], G. S. Kirk and J. E. Raven, eds., *Presocratic Philosophers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964), 396-397, 399; C.f. Leo Strauss, "Origin of the notion of natural right," *Natural Right and History*, (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1953), 93-94, 97, 115-17; Plato *Protagoras* passim; Heraclitus, frag. 102 *Kirk and Raven*, 193.

The *History*, this fabric of fables, is a patchwork of stories about a variety of human customs. These accounts of the *nomoi*, concentrated mainly in Books 1-4, first gain and dominate our attention. Much scholarship, in particular that which is designated here as 'historiographical,' attends simply to the presented 'facts,' the *nomoi*. Even when the theoretical possibility of 'custom-as-an-element' is reached, *nomos* thus represented eclipses the fact of its representation – by those who hold the customs and by Herodotus.

Fixing on culture, we will discover custom as essential to Herodotus' narrative, and will neglect the logos, the account that unifies all the diverse and disparate elements into a single artifact. Despite presenting less an interpretation of Herodotus than a survey of the trends of attitudes towards Herodotus, Charles Fornara distinguishes between the artistic and developmental views of the *History*'s construction. My attitude is best characterized as adherence to the artistic school. Attending to sources outside the *History* distracts us from the re-presentation of a kind of inter-subjective, developmental model of the growth of knowledge. In general, there is little agreed upon, even within a broad scholarly 'school' that maintains that the 'patchwork' nature of the *History* suggests its development as fully separate pieces. This view attends more to the material historical context in which Herodotus lived, how this affected his intellectual development and how the *History* reflects this development.[13] Attending to *nomoi*, even as participants in *nomos*, truncates a complete understanding of Herodotus' full achievement. It is better to imagine the *History* not as an episodic travelogue, but as a picaresque novel, employing the movement of inquiry as a narrative and

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13 Charles W. Fornara, *Herodotus; An Interpretive Essay* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), 1-3 et passim 1-24.

organizational strategy. The most promising interaction of the textual 'insiders' and 'outsiders' is in the context of attention to concepts as part of the artifacts of Herodotus' time and the subsequent interest in the construction of those concepts within the framework of the *History*. Herodotus' creation, as single, studied and artistic, gets some of its best attention in an esoteric writing framework. The resistance of the *History*'s passages to definitive reading is both inviting and daunting. Some of Herodotus' most perceptive students begin with his playfulness.[14]

In the context of "custom is king of all" (nomon pantōn basilea 3.38), *nomos* is not any particular norm itself, but the "fountainhead of norms." The story of Darius' account of custom leads our inquiries to the account of custom rather than simply to custom. Grene's footnote to the restated Pindar shows the way through a maelstrom of scholarship.

> Herodotus, by separating off the three Greek words that mean "custom, king of all," has given a quite different significance to them [...] what people habitually do to give expression to what they think of as right, or as sound, is absolutely master of everything - though what he means by "everything" is vague.[15]

Herodotus not only shows his custom-bound and custom-breaking seeker in the investigative

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14On conceptual artifacts in Herodotus Q.v. Martin Ostwald *Nomos and the Beginnings of the Athenian Democracy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969); W. Robert Connor, "Commentary" *Arethusa* 20 (1987 *Herodotus and the Invention of History*): 255-62. On textual concepts q.v. François Hartog, *The Mirror of Herodotus: the representation of the other in the writing of history*, trans. J. Lloyd. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988); Carolyn Dewald, "Reading the World," in *Nomodeikes: Studies in Honor of Martin Ostwald*, eds. R. M. Rosen and J. Farrell (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993). On the esoteric question q.v. Stanley Rosen, "Herodotus Reconsidered," in *Herodotus: the histories: new translation, selection, backgrounds, commentaries*, trans. Walter Blanco, eds. W. Blanco and Jennifer Tolbert (New York: Norton, 1992); Sydney Keith "Herodotus: The First Political Scientist," (Toronto: Dissertation University of Toronto, 1989); Norma Thompson, *Herodotus and the Origins of Political Community* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996).

15Grene, footnote #4 to Herodot. *Hist.*, 228; Ostwald, *Nomos*, 27-28. C.f. Grene, endnote to Hdt. 3.38, 666-67.

foreground, but also shows himself giving an account of the account of custom. Not custom simply, but the transmitted story of custom is king of all in Herodotus' *History*. What people do, what peoples do and what Herodotus does to give expression to what they think of as sound is our interest. The acts of meaning-making are the subject of the *History*.

Norma Thompson recognizes these problems of interpretation in her own comments on the same passage: made in full knowledge that they would be found inadequate by past, present or future Herodotean readers, and that great stories "will not stay in place, they will not be determined for all time." Her prescription is therefore that the reader "must engage with the story to draw what seem to be appropriate conclusions, for the moral that is given resolves almost nothing (This is Aristotle's complaint)."[16] Although our investigation owes much to commentators who embrace the *History* as an esoteric writing, this openness to Herodotus' own tolerance for mystery is an important contribution to Herodotean scholarship.

Throughout her critical survey, Thompson objects to the restrictions that a strictly material historical perspective puts on reading Herodotus suspiciously. She suggests that Herodotus was aware of the epistemological difficulties of the project he purports to be presenting. Many commentators are eager to engage Herodotus' "most famous vignette." It exactly replicates the interest and frustration of examining the mysterious, and remains provocatively, quintessentially Herodotean in its enigmatic openness. Few, however, have the courage to acknowledge the difficulty, even the impossibility, of a decisive interpretation. Thus they fail to push the questionability of received, exoteric opinion to the notion of hidden

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16 Thompson, 140.

teachings and then beyond toward the questionability of a particular reading of Herodotus.[17] Herodotus troubles rather than maintains the distinction of hearsay and inspection, like that between opinion and knowledge.

Centring 'story' as constitutive of political community, Thompson provides a helpful way through the contentious issue of artistic fictionalism versus historical accuracy, and focusses attention on Herodotus' lessons on the construction of knowledge in community.

Impressed with the scope of W. K. Pritchett's understanding and study of Herodotus, and agreeing in large part with his critique of the disdain for truths in the 'liar school,' Thompson nonetheless parts company with him over the issue of suspicious reading that allows for philosophical investigation. Pritchett's over-emphasis of objectivity fails to hear Herodotus' admonitions to be careful reader-investigators ourselves. Herodotus' stories are consciously and provocatively open. Without a decisive interpretation and yet insisting on interpretation, the stories reproduce the invitation and frustration of investigating phenomena.

For the *nomos*-student of Herodotus, Sally Humphreys' appraisal is also salutary: *nomos* is an explanatory tool that ends investigation as it provides explanation. The three versions of the kingship of *nomos* that we get from Herodotus (Callatian, Greek and Persian) do not by their diversity lead her to a strong relativist reading of Herodotus here, because of the context of Cambyses' outrageous disrespect of many customs, foreign and domestic. (Hdt. 3.31-37) Thus divorcing Herodotus from the sophistic modes current when he set forth his inquiries, she finds nomos at the epistemological centre of the mysterious and the intelligible.

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17 Thompson, 135.

The illumination leaves penumbrae. The various *nomoi* of three different peoples lead us from particulars to the concept nomos and leave us there. The loci of understanding are multiple, and Herodotus, as is often the case, makes little clearer in his appeal to the definite, the obvious, or the observed. *Opsis* may be a better ground for knowledge than hearsay, but Herodotus seldom uses it to remove doubt or to confirm reports. Seeing doesn't necessarily remove the difficulties of understanding diverse hearings. *Opsis* also problematizes the world it reports: it uncovers more evidence, but sheds no more light. The investigating narrator uses interview and *opsis* to witness the complexity and difficulty of translating experience into narrative. The accounts Herodotus verifies with the things he sees become hearsay for his audience.[18]

When examined in the context of the enigmatic openness of Thompson's Herodotus, Sydney Keith's statement of Herodotus' mischievousness challenges the predominantly up-down metaphor of esotericism, because Keith simultaneously invokes and subverts the metaphor.

> Herodotus uses the emphatic opinions he enunciates in the book as a kind of litmus test to distinguish between people capable of doubting all authority, including his own, and the majority who are constitutionally incapable of doing so.[19]

Herodotus' open doubt of all authority invites the audience to doubt his. A tension between

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18 Carolyn Dewald, "Narrative Surface and Authorial Voice in Herodotus' *History*," 157-158; Thompson, 141, 145; Sally Humphreys, "Law, Custom and Culture in Herodotus," *Arethusa* 20 (1987), 218-219. Herodotus shows his awareness of such difficulties by exacerbating and highlighting them, in a way riding the boundaries of the knowledge he is ostensibly eager to secure. C.f. Hdt. 1.8-12.

19 Keith, 36. C.f. Friedric Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Random House Vintage Books, 1989), s. 30, 295. Herodotus holds to the image that Nietzsche modifies. The litmus metaphor with which Keith emphasizes an either-or rather also suggests a range of relative (acidic-basic) values.

seeking wisdom and preserving society is mediated by sharing this endeavour with the audience, leaving his teaching suspiciousness open to scrutiny and challenge.

Taking Nietzsche's lead on the up-down esoteric-exoteric axis, we discover in Herodotus a more complex matrix of relationships than the above-below dualism suggested by being intelligible only to the initiated. For Herodotus it is proximity, not height, that informs initiates. In keeping with the anti-polar tenor of Nietzsche's encouragement to nuance, Herodotus provides a gradient of accessibility to accounts rather than a strict inside-outside division of initiate status. Within the curious traveller's roaming space there lies multiple dualities of 'we' and 'they'; these dualities are relative in proximity and accessibility to discovery, rather than ranked in order of constitutional imperatives. In this connection we will consider later the relative ambivalence of Herodotus' categories of belonging.[20]

The question of Herodotus' exoteric writing concerns us on at least two different axes. In addressing the *nomos*-question as the background starting-point for this inquiry, the issue of esoteric writing is in contrast to much Herodotean scholarship. Commentators on a philosophic Herodotus seem especially struck by the esotericism suggested by the difficulty of unearthing from Herodotus' text some essential lessons. Because of Herodotus' openness about his endeavour, his audience is in the position of placing a doxology of esotericism itself under inspection. As Strauss notes first among his rules of inquiry: "reading between the lines is strictly prohibited in all cases when it would be less exact than not doing so." If the standard of such exactness is to be taken from the character of the work in question, then Herodotus'

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20 On barbaros q.v. Grene, footnote #4 to Hdt. 1.4, *History*, 34-35; c.f. infra ch. 7, footnote #11.

performance narrative redoubles our difficulty in knowing how to proceed.[21]

The question remains as to whether Herodotus' text exists in the kind of 'persecuted' milieu that characterizes an illiberal community and against which the philosophic disposition rebels and in which it must live.[22] Is the *History* an exoteric writing-event, set forth, out of necessity, with careful, artful deception? If it is, does this demand the esoteric pedagogical and hermeneutic approaches espoused most candidly by Keith and Rosen? Can modern students of Herodotus respond to a persecuted text in a variety of ways? Is it possible and desirable to maintain an Herodotean scepticism and inclusivity?

Here the question of genre resurfaces as central to the enterprise of engaging Herodotus. As Strauss advises, we must understand what we confront in enduring writings, those of the ancients perhaps especially because they have endured longest. Herodotus does not seem very secretive about the doubtfulness of his enterprise. Part of the difficulty with embracing a persecuted text approach is that it stems, despite Strauss' prior caveat, as much from the tradition of scholarship as from the writing in question. An esoteric reading of Herodotus is as much a comment on the tradition of scholarship as on the *History*. This forms a kind of academic 'make-over' of monumental writings. Such a make-over is welcome in Herodotus' case, provided that there are no grounds for Strauss' strict prohibition.

Herodotus' *History* seems ripe for the kind of reading given by Keith; my inquiry is particularly indebted to his perceptive Ph.D. thesis. From this promising beginning, Keith

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21 Leo Strauss, *Persecution and the Art of Writing*. (Glencoe, Il.: The Free Press, 1952), 31-32, 30.

22 Strauss, *Persecution*, 21, 30, 36.

triumphs repeatedly over more simplistic readings. Giving a reading of Herodotus' account of Homer's account of Troy, he suggests that his main contribution to Herodotean scholarship has been the recovery of the *History* as an exoteric/esoteric text. This is partially so. The difficult arises when trying to subsume the different levels on which Herodotus undeniably wrote with a bifurcation of lessons, those for the doubters and those for the faithful. That Herodotus is continually and eminently tricky, throughout the whole *History*, cannot, as Keith maintains, be entirely subsumed under Herodotus' discussion of Homer's non-thematic details. (Hdt. 2.116-118)[23] Keith's arguments are exceptional but not omnipotent research tools. Showing himself sharing narrative control, Herodotus endures by allowing for access, not by restricting it. Doubters and others are alike embraced by the *History*.

Herodotus reveals much in digressions. He challenges his audience with outrageous contradictions and emphatic fantasies that require much unpacking. If Herodotus "keeps his true opinions particularly hidden," it is to teach that true opinion and objectivity are not twin with clarity, the obvious or the simple. This draws the audience into a detective mystery. Herodotus' hidden opinions remain hidden only until they are our opinions. The lessons are the result of a performative re-engagement with the stories in the text-space. Meanings are not in the world, but in our engaged access of that world. To represent this invitation with precision is Herodotus' triumph. We must not merely read, but participate in an authored and inclusive performance. Keith correctly stresses Herodotus' own emphasis of eye-witnessing (*opsis*) over hearsay (*akouē*) for the purposes of distinguishing opinion from knowledge, and

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23 Keith, 34-35, 345-346.

thus separates a surface theology from a deeper science.[24] What is neglected, however, and seems endemic to the optics of hidden teachings, is the possibility of an observer external to the interrelation of author, text, phenomena and audience; this a presumed perspective akin to a gods'-eye view of the proceedings.[25] The investigation Herodotus represents is, for better or worse, more messy than that which might be visible from great heights. These reservations about an exoteric-esoteric interpretive framework are made solely in their application to Herodotus. Keith's best contributions are the instructive underlining of the divergence of Herodotus' inquiry from Socratic knowledge-seeking.[26] Keith stresses Herodotus' ethnographic, walkabout model of knowledge-seeking and his more wholesale scepticism, which Socrates might have considered bordering on misologic. The Herodotean interview allows for this more than the Platonic dialogue.

The key divergence Keith notes from Socratic thought is towards an 'extreme empiricism,' couched with deeper doubts about the possibility of knowledge, that led Herodotus to a more intensive and pragmatic study of the sphere of human customary practice. Emphatically denying that knowledge of the human soul is the path to knowledge about the world, Herodotus looked instead into the wide and diverse world of human beliefs and customs, seeking "to lay bare the various types of human faculties emphasized by each people's way of life." In this light, while the dialogues of Plato's Socrates are more 'philosophical,' Herodotus' inquiry is more 'political' - in a way perhaps more modern than

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24 Keith, 343-344, 357.

25 Heraclitus, frag. 102 *Kirk and Raven*, 193.

26 Keith, 357.

classical.

> Herodotus seems to have anticipated the reasoning of the modern Enlightenment that the impossibility of a true, comprehensive science points mankind's endeavours towards practice, the organizing of its common life to minimize the many evils to which human beings are subject.[27]

As we shall see later, the kinship of ideas between Herodotus and moderns as early as Machiavelli has occurred to other current Herodotean commentators.

Ever-multiplying social studies that follow from the Enlightenment also allow for a heightened resonance between Herodotus and modernity. Especially to students of the sciences, Herodotus is increasingly interesting and current; he is less isolated from the historical tradition than at any time since the publication of the *History*. Arnaldo Momigliano touches on this surprising affinity: "It is a strange truth that Herodotus has really become the father of history only in modern times."[28] In addition to the expanding interests in the range of human practice giving greater legitimacy to the scope of Herodotus' sources, the relatively recent shift in ethnological methodology towards narrative and literary interpretation, is permitting a greater degree of integration in Herodotean studies.

Stewart Flory's remarks on Herodotus' equivocal strategy of representation, especially as it applies to the so-called 'ethnographic' first half of the *History*, are crucial to grasping Herodotus' pedagogy and epistemology. The inquiry is set up in terms of contrasting anecdotes, establishing divergence, sometimes opposing principles of representing the science

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27 Keith, 346-47. C.f. Rosen, "Herodotus Reconsidered."

28 Arnaldo Momigliano, "The Place of Herodotus in the History of Historiography," *History* 43 (1958), 13; Sir John Arthur Evans, "Father of History or Father of Lies? The reputation of Herodotus," *Classical Journal* 64 (1968), 17. Q.v. Geertz, 104-109, et passim 1-24.

of human affairs. In different chapters, or even within a single chapter, Herodotus puts forth a mythological tale contrasted with a careful reasoned account. The tension between the strictly sensible and knowable on the one hand, and the irrational and accidental on the other is a prominent theme throughout the *History*. By marrying sensible, even perhaps 'hypersensible' accounts with reports of the capricious complexities of individual motivation, Herodotus pushes each to their extremes. (e.g. on Babylonian corn-growth, bride-price and physician-market 1.193, 1.196, 1.199) Whether reporting logical or illogical beliefs and customs, Herodotus exploits the over-extension of one perspective to show another as seemingly more reasonable; thus he makes use of the beautifully wondrous and the patently absurd. This, however, is not merely to establish a 'scarecrow' position that is easily refuted by another stated or implicit position, but to set forth the tension and mediation between the accounts, and stress their relationship to each other. "Dissimilarity, dissonance and contradiction are essential features of the *History*."[29]

These tensions suggest that Herodotus is keenly aware of the difficulties inherent in the necessities of his *logos*, and the performative problems his *History* faces, especially in light of his repeating stories he says he does not believe (e.g. 2.123). Colourful fiction contrasts dull fact, demonstrating the various attractions of myths and histories, and the disparate staying power of truths and fictions, intertwined in the *nomoi* of communities and individuals. Grene confirms this as Herodotus' central, repeated interest: the beliefs and that people hold, regardless of their truth. "The History is as much about what people believe and think as it is

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29 Flory, 23-24, 27.

about events that happen – and less about whether events did happen than that people thought they did." Correctly, Grene pushes the notion of the *History* as a sociology of religions towards it being an inquiry into the nature of human knowledge. Thought is as important as deeds or events in the Herodotean account of history.[30]

When considering both the inclusion of ethnographic knowledge-seeking and the more wholesale scepticism, the openness of Flory's account to the possibility of an Herodotean 'historical novel' shares certain affinities with attempts to develop and characterize what Stephen A. Tyler calls a 'postmodern ethnographic document.' Within a framework that attempts to challenge strict logical-conceptual and material-historical models, the anecdotal interweaving of factual and fictional perspectives, in an interpretive rather than reductionist enterprise, better serves the inquiry into human affairs.[31] The History provides a place for the audience to explore on their own; we make our reading of Herodotus' writing part of the re-performance (*apodexis*) of the inquiry. Although the role of *logios* is primarily reserved for Herodotus, the audience's engagement with his text precludes a straightforward correspondence between his setting-forth and the phenomena there represented. Detlev Fehling's unsettling challenge to received opinions about Herodotus' actual travels, interest in historical accuracy and concern for scientific truth prepares us for a better appreciation of Herodotus' performance. In his provocative statement, as Thompson for example argues, Fehling has pushed Herodotus too far into a capricious nihilism. W. K. Pritchett reacts

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30 Grene, footnote #45 to Hdt. 1.123, *History*, 184-185; Sir John Linton Myres, *Herodotus, Father of History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1953), 50.

31 Flory, 151-154. C.f. Keith, 344; Detlev Fehling, *Herodotus and His Sources; citation, narrative and invention*, trans. J. G. Howie (Liverpool: Francis Cairn, 1989), 96-97, 252.

especially against Fehling's account in responding to the so-called Liar School.

In a daunting monograph, Pritchett takes aim at the 'fictionalists' who stress the artistic Herodotus at the expense of the scientific. What Pritchett cannot abide is the possibility that fictions about the facts can hold any value beyond mere entertainment. His critique of Fehling rests on an impressive volume of extra-textual material that supports Herodotus' accounts as historically accurate (inter-subjectively verifiable). Rather than accuracy or truth, however, it is Herodotus' *apodexis* that saves the past from oblivion by enacting it: frustratingly various, complex, contradictory and often obtuse. His central aim is not a scientific one, to foster the growth of knowledge, but rather a poetic one, to transfigure experience.[32]

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32 Fehling, 249-251; Stephen A. Tyler, "Post-Modern Ethnography: from document of the occult to occult document," in *Writing Culture: the Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*, ed. J. Clifford and G. Marcus (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 138, 132, 135. Walter. K. Pritchett, *Liar School of Herodotus* (Amsterdam: J. G. Giben, 1993).

The History as romance-anatomy

> I see [Herodotus] more as one of those spare men of the desert who travel from oasis to oasis, trading legends as if it is the exchange of seeds, consuming everything without suspicion, piecing together a mirage. "This History of mine," Herodotus says, "has from the beginning sought out the supplementary to the main argument."[1]

Since the award-winning 1992 novel and successful adaptation to film in 1995 of *The English Patient*, students of Herodotus are enjoying a certain affirmation by more mainstream mass culture. Tom Harrison's, "Herodotus and the English Patient," shows the use of the *History* as an appropriate structural and thematic guide, and textual companion to a thoroughly modern story.

> For the thousands inspired by Anthony Minghella's Oscar-winning film of Ondaatje's novel to rush out and buy a copy of the 'Father of History,' the epic sweep of the *Histories* will be only one of a number of familiar features.[2]

What features of Ondaatje's novel and Herodotus' logos brought the two together? Although perhaps a digression from our main inquiry, a better appreciation of Ondaatje's choice of the *History* as a companion-text and his selections show Herodotus' complementarity to a romance and mystery. Although the *History* is not fully encompassed by romance, Ondaatje's use of Gyges' complicity with the Lydian Queen foreshadows Katherine's infidelity with Almasy. The transfer of kingdom centres on the Queen; Katherine willingly adds mistress

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1Almasy speaks in Michael Ondaatje, *The English Patient: a novel* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1992), 118; Hdt. 4.30.

2Thomas Harrison, "Herodotus and The English Patient," *Classics Ireland* 5 (1998), 48. The challenge, that Ondaatje's clever use of Herodotus in the *English Patient* is merely or mainly meant to lend intellectual cachet to his mystery and romance novel cannot be simply dismissed without comment. Supposing that one storyteller's intuition about another could illuminate the genre question, we may consider the use and abuse of Herodotus in *The English Patient* as precise and purposive, and not merely part of a novel enterprise by an intellectual novelist. Ondaatje selected elements from the *History* that suggest a more profound affinity. Richard Myers, Associate Professor, Saint Thomas University (Fredericton, NB), electronic correspondence with author, 8 January 1998. Jacinthe Seignet, ongoing correspondence and conversation, 1996-present.

to her role as Clifton's wife. It is the woman around whom the triangle is built. Manifesting "true necessity," (*anagkaiēn alētheōs*) the Queen's self-mastery circumvents Candaules' naive desires. (1.8 ērasthē, c.f. Cambyses 3.31) He supposes her the most beautiful, the most noble (*hē kallistē*) of women, and thus the most loyal rather than most spirited.

Thus we discover the problem of erotic desire as it challenges convention and the support convention can enjoy. In the early Greek tradition, *nomos* is given legitimacy mainly by being a convention observed by those living under its influence.[3] Herodotus de-emphasizes this understanding by stressing the queen's insistence, as much as the custom that Candaules transgresses, as the source of the respect she is due. It is not simply as a wife that she will enjoy this respect, but as an insistent queen. The queen's authoritative summons, which Gyges is accustomed to obeying, gives custom the force to rule, and to punish Candaules for his interruption of the law. (1.11) The one use by Herodotus here (1.11) of *hē basileia* (the queen), instead of *hē gunē* (the woman, wife) throughout, differentiates her authoritative role in commanding from that as a woman living under the rule of *nomos*. The Gyges story is a running commentary on the triangle of love and betrayal that is a key subject of Ondaatje's narrative.

The ethnographic and archeological enterprise of the 'International Sand Club,' a small displaced tribe of wanderer-investigators, engages Herodotus' taste for the exotic.[4] The advent of the Second World War throws the romanticism of their inquiries into sharp relief, and

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3Martin Ostwald, *Nomos and the Beginnings of the Athenian Democracy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), 55.

4Ondaatje, 136.

suggests a parallel with Herodotus' ambivalent position relative to the Peloponnesian conflict for which his contemporaries were preparing themselves. Herodotus' patchwork of *nomoi*, assembled and reordered in an invented framework, is an apt common-place book to hold the patient's scrapbook clippings. It also shapes and informs the patient's sense of historical and human sciences, for example by the relationship between propinquity and understanding.[5] Herodotus presents this propinquity as "a progression of honour in relation to distance," among the Persians who "hold least in honour those whose habitation is furthest form theirs." (1.134) The Nasamonian and Libyan accounts show that although honour may stem from a central, parochial and egotistical source, attainable knowledge diminishes with the distance the investigator or his informants must travel, or the degrees of separation between an event and its re-telling to our story-keeper. (2.32-33; 4.168-199)

An early example of access to knowledge, and also an image of public and private spheres, is Deioces' walls (1.98-101). The walls reinforce an inside-outside metaphor of access; the separation is tempered, however, by the lines of transmission of cases and judgements that enable Deioces to exercise his actual rule. Despite the impossibility of access to the ruler, and his accompanying quasi-deification, the network of related ministers establishes a permeable structure of access. This may not be any less sinister, but the authoritarian model is mediated. Deioces recedes from the human realm, in which he was once a capable and respected judge, and moves into a quasi-divine realm of potentially over-

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5Ondaatje, 150; Hdt. Scythian ethnology 4.16, Libyans 4.168-199 and Nassamones 2.32-33; Detlev Fehling, *Herodotus and His Sources; citation, narrative and invention*, trans. J. G. Howie (Liverpool: Francis Cairn, 1989), 255, 258.

extended ambition.[6]

Our sense of Deioces' distance and distinction from his fellows is tempered with a flattering presentation of his rulership. Instead of Deioces' ambition feeding disproportionately on social distance, his appetite for distinction knows certain, admittedly grand, limits. Grene emphasizes that because Deioces shrinks from frivolous aggrandizement, a restraint that generally eludes Herodotus' despots; he distinguishes himself from other monarchs in the *History*, who push the limits, ultimately to their undoing. To have his distinction recognized, Deioces is satisfied with creating a new, strictly bounded community.[7]

Ondaatje uses Herodotus to stress that great betrayals of wartime occur as much between friends as enemies and intimates as much as strangers, and to contrast the "assured order" of historical accounts to the hesitant chaos of novelistic narratives. By quoting Tacitus as an example of this authorial assurance of order, however, Ondaatje consciously renders problematic a similar appreciation of Herodotus' endeavour, and thus of Ondaatje's own representation of the relationship between story and history.[8]

Herodotus' proem initially and provisionally places him on the side of assured order. Certain stories that Herodotus saves from ignomy, however, press themselves into his *logos* according to a necessity that he may understand, but of which he neither has full control, nor is comfortable with acknowledging fully. ("because my history forces me to do so [mention the

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6C.f. the onion-image of totalitarian regimes in Hannah Arendt, "What is Political Authority," in *Between Past and Future* (New York: Viking Press, 1984), 99.

7Grene, footnote #41 to Hdt. 1.101, *History*, 81.

8Ondaatje, 93; Tacitus, *History*, trans. Kenneth Wellesley (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Classics, 1988), 31-32.

gods]," 2.3. C.f. 7.96 "it is not necessary for the purposes of my History.") Ondaatje's novel shares a certain reluctant authority with Herodotus' *History*. "Novels commenced with hesitation or chaos. Readers were never fully in balance. A door a lock a weir opened and they rushed through, one hand holding a gunnel, the other a hat."[9]

The affinity of elements, themes and narrative structure that Ondaatje selected from the *History* suggested to me that he has a more sophisticated understanding of Herodotus than I had originally supposed. These affinities between Ondaatje's romance and the *History* show forth a kind of epic mystery and romance. Herodotus leads us into an endeavour that allows for errors and corrections, and allows us to do battle for our beliefs and our acknowledgement. The interpretive schema suited to such a genre, however, proved insufficient to address the satirical and fantastic elements that make the *History* more than a picaresque investigative novel and akin rather to (e.g.) Swift's *Travels of Lemuel Gulliver*. As far as it goes, Ondaatje's use of the *History* shows its willing, novelistic abandonment to the motion and relative chaos of the narrative.

The supplement to the *roman* genre is provided by Frye's account of the Menippean satire, or 'anatomy.' This model both explains the possibility of confusing the 'satire with the romance, as the two do share certain key features, and moves beyond the simpler form of epic romance to a more satisfying placement of the *History* as a comprehensive narrative.

The *History* survives in a broad narrative tradition. Even in antiquity, some saw Herodotus as the 'father of history' (Cicero), and others as the 'father of lies' (Plutarch) began

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9Ondaatje, 93.

in antiquity. Although acknowledging that Herodotus fabricated many of his accounts, and understanding that poetry and history were different ways of representing the world, antiquity still granted Herodotus the reputation of founding history. The importance of segregating fact from fiction was not as entrenched as it would later become. It is worth stressing that it seems nearly impossible for modern historiography to understand how this could be possible, let alone desirable.[10]

The ambivalent reputation of Herodotus began soon after publication of the *History*, and spurred an endless argument between defenders of his scientific, historical inquiry, and the critics of his mere storytelling: fanciful, and solely interested in pleasing an audience. Fuel to ancient historians' attacks were Herodotus' followers who further distanced their work from scientific history and moved towards a kind of historical fiction.

After it was set forth, the *History* was read and heard because of the greatness of style, rather than historical veracity; from this came its longevity and appeal. Certain modern scholars find defences of Herodotus based on his vivid, graceful and radiant prose disturbing in their almost cavalier disregard for reliable historical accuracy or truth.[11] This repeated historiographical stress on Herodotus' narrative charm and literary qualities, as the source of his longevity and appeal, entirely ignores the question of the philosophical richness of his

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10 Sydney Keith, footnote #12, "Herodotus: The First Political Scientist," (Toronto: Dissertation University of Toronto, 1989), 55.

11Sir John Arthur Evans, "Father of History or Father of Lies? The reputation of Herodotus," *Classical Journal* 64 (1968), 13-14; Arnaldo Momigliano, "The Place of Herodotus in the History of Historiography," *History* 43 (1958), 7.

inquiry that interested many ancient and post-classical thinkers.[12]

Scientific history and archaeology find the *History* a deficient, if curious, historical document. Most attempts to take Herodotus seriously as a thinker focus on Herodotus' narrative accomplishments. In order that the *History* might begin again to have its due, a narrative analysis, with certain appropriate interpretive tools for constructing meaning, is better equipped to address the vast scope and richness of Herodotus' *logos*.

Thompson rightly eschews the analytic frame of existing and possible discourse that would place Herodotus' chronologically presocratic text within the framework of post-modernity. Flory challenges that she "too often becomes bogged down in citing modern scholarship tangential to her topic rather than pursuing an argument based on the text."[13] Making better than merely digressionary use of this scholarship, Thompson places Herodotus in an eclectic company of moderns to aid her interpretation. If there are certain misgivings as to the wisdom of this approach, Orwin's assessment eases the critical edge of such objections. Describing what he sees as Thompson's overstatement of Herodotus' belief in the creative, poetic power of human beings over the phenomena that form their horizons, Orwin characterizes her Herodotus parenthetically as "somewhat Heideggerian." Her inattention to the roles of nature and necessity in Herodotus, he argues, present an all-too-modern Herodotus, one who lacks an appreciation of humans' limited power in the face of all that

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12Keith, 1, footnote #4, 54. Keith provides a list that could begin a dozen inquiries. Each one could address a particular author's use and abuse of Herodotus. Thompson's *Origins* attempts this in the case of Aristotle, Benardete's *Inquiries* is indebted to Rousseau on this count. Keith himself gives a corrective look at Plutarch's specific study of Herodotus, attempting to recover it from Plutarch scholars so that it might be of use to students of Herodotus.

13Stewart Flory, review of *Herodotus and the Origins of Political Community*, by Norma Thompson, *American History Review* 102 (June 1997), 789.

confronts them.[14]

We must, however, recognize that Thompson's modernist intuition is excellent, and her difficult lead still seems preferable. Avoiding an account overly encumbered by postmodernist language, and yet not ignoring the fertility of characterizing an oddly modern Herodotus within the context of modern interpretive approaches, we may learn from the *History*. With more radical postmodernist language in view and in hand, we may approach Herodotus with openness, enthusiastic caution and suspicion of his and our interpretative project.[15]

Students of contemporary literary criticism may find Northrop Frye passé and even quaint, and question his use for Herodotean studies. Frye's rooted position in an outmoded structuralism makes his strict categorizations suspect in a post-structuralist climate. The challenge that Frye presents, however, to a strictly segregated and highly specialized study is his encyclopedic comprehensivity; this allows generalizations beyond the ken of most critical specialists.[16]

Concluding his theory of genre with an account of the 'anatomy,' Frye presents it as a "loose-jointed narrative" often confused with the romance, citing Rabelais and Swift among his examples. What is thrust on students of Herodotus in this connection is the degree to which the narrator *persona* is transformed by the experience of having undertaken his investigation. If we

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14Clifford Orwin, review of *Herodotus and the Origins of Political Community*, by Norma Thompson, *American Political Science Review* 90:4 (December 1996), 899-900.

15C.f. "Forcing, adjusting, abbreviating, omitting, padding, inventing, falsifying, and whatever else is the *essence* of interpreting." Friedrich Nietzsche, "What is the Meaning of Ascetic Ideals," in *On the Genealogy of Morals*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Random House Vintage Books, 1967), s. 24.

16Barry Pomeroy, PhD. candidate English Literature, University of Manitoba; Eric Liddell, PhD. candidate Comparative Literature, University of Toronto, ongoing conversations, January 1999-present.

are to accept the *History* as an account in action, then we must consider the effect of this experience on the narrator, in the first place, and the audience and students in the second. To recover in the *History* a voracious, assimilative narrative, seemingly indiscriminate in its inclusivity, is to perceive a complex web of interrelationships among the characters figured therein, the author, his audience and students.

The anatomy diverges from the romance, however, in that the exploits of protagonist heroes are not the strict subject of the anatomy; it is rather a "free play of intellectual fancy" that reconfigures the world in terms of intellectual patterns. In its concern with mental attitudes rather than with actual people, the anatomy presents a parade of mouthpieces of ideas as its characters. The structure established to present this vision "makes for violent dislocations in the customary logic of narrative." These disjunctions are often judged as carelessness by the author, but reflect "only the carelessness of the reader ... to judge by a novel-centric concept of fiction." His definition of anatomy as "a dissection or analysis," aptly expresses the "highly intellectualized approach of this form," that is characterized by a "great variety of subject-matter and a strong interest in ideas."[17]

Like all comprehensive works, the *History* fits any particular categorization with difficulty. The question of genre emerges as a salient question in narrative Herodotean studies; an attempt to classify it is an unavoidable if ultimately impossible task. Using Frye's anachronistic approach attempts to address the incompleteness of developmental accounts of the *History*. Although it is fruitful to discover how Herodotus' logos is indebted to Homer and

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17Northrop Frye, "Rhetorical Criticism: Theory of Genres," in *Anatomy of Criticism: four essays* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), 309-310, 365.

the tradition of epic storytelling, Herodotus' endeavour and achievement is different, and defeats evolutionary characterizations from both the historiographical and narrative analysis camps of scholarship.

Herodotus has few antecedents, none entire, and is thus at risk of reduction only to a sum of parts that is much less than the whole. A difficult, disrupted patriliny extends from Homer and Aeschylus, epic poetry and tragic drama, to our inquiry performer. Herodotus' original and unique writing event impairs our attempts to model his relationship to his precursors and followers. The axiomatic common sense that is cited from Herodotus' inquiries is anything but simplistic. Herodotus would no doubt be pleased that his great deeds have not "failed of their report"; it would, however, dismay him to learn that we have taken to abusing him in a way so diametrically opposed to his temperament of openness and scepticism.

Herodotus' emphasis of the contradictory and ambiguous character of events, nature and human deeds does not place him unequivocally among Thucydides' antecedants, perhaps most clearly in the distance from events that Herodotus preserves, contrasted to the immediacy of Thucydides' representation. Focussing on the bedrock structure of Herodotus' text, Henry Immerwahr's comprehensive analysis gives us a sense of the internal consistency of the genius at work. Immerwahr stresses the genealogy of Herodotus' artistry (in epic poetry and drama) in describing the architecture of the *History*. Where Herodotus fails to match up with any prior lineage, and Immerwahr notes the discrepancies, he is more telling and interesting. In these lacunae, folklorists such as Mabel Lang counter the strictly articulated skeleton structure imbedded within the text. Hers is an oral storyteller's understanding contrasted with

Immerwahr's literary understanding.[18] Because the ultimate meaning of the flow of history cannot be as clear as in poetry or drama, Herodotus, perhaps more than any writer before or since, succeeds in saving the phenomena by preserving their paradoxical meanings, thus representing something closer to the event itself. Thus we find Herodotus' ethics and metaphysics half-way between a theology indebted to Aeschylus and a more complete humanism forged by Thucydides. Human beings are both great and weak, subject and object, agent and victim of situations, forces and fates.[19] To imagine as an inevitably necessity humans' belief in falsehoods (e.g. that justice in communities is supported by the gods) introduces a distinction that Herodotus is not inclined to make or to value. "That's false" is no more of an objection to Herodotus than "That's odd," or "That's an amazing story."

Situating Herodotus in Frye's discussion of literary theory and genres I attempt to correct his frustrating omission of Herodotus in his analysis. Considering Homer, Frye discusses the twin pairs of life-rhythms in individual life and death, and the longer-term rise and fall of cities, nations and peoples. He fails, however, to make the essential movement from Homer's attribution of overseeing such rise and fall to the gods, to Herodotus' attempt to ground an understanding of such human experiences in the problematic sphere of attainable human knowledge.[20] With this omission, Frye bypasses the ancient tradition that would provide the ground for modern encyclopedic anatomy and satire

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18Henry R. Immerwahr, "Historical Action in Herodotus," *Transactions of the American Philological Association* (1966), 16; Henry R. Immerwahr, *Form and Thought in Herodotus* (Cleveland: Western Reserve Press, 1966).

19 Immerwahr, "Historical Action," 27, 30, 44-45.

20 Frye, 312.

(uncovered by Frye in Rabelais and Swift especially).

More importantly, my use of Frye's schema attempts to draw the narrative consideration of Herodotus to the realization that the *History* is a *logos* of interacting complex ideas. The diverse *nomoi* of the people scattered throughout it are not merely museum pieces for our perusal and amusement, but interacting notions of how people have lived and living questions as to how we ought to live. Incorporated into the narrative view of the *History* the anatomy category gives a fuller appreciation of the ideational *History* and allows for the political scope to expand into the 'ideological.' "A clearer understanding of the forms and traditions of the anatomy would make a good many elements in the history of literature come into focus." Perhaps Flory might scoff less at Thompson's comparison of Herodotus' *History* and Melville's *Moby Dick*, were he to consider Frye's description of Moby Dick as a romance-anatomy. Although the *History* may be a highly intellectualized description and analysis, as a form of satire its attitude combines fantasy and morality, and is at ease stressing both aspects.[21]

In this connection, though he does not seem willing to uncover its full implications, J. A. S. Evans' connection of Herodotus' *nomos* (custom), to its cognate *nomizein* (to believe, think) is crucially important.[22] This addresses the intimate relationship between Herodotus' concern with *nomos* and his *logos*-project; this conceptual knot needs to be kept in mind throughout. As Orwin rightly stresses in assessing Thompson's work, the *logoi* of the peoples in the *History* form the core of their cultures, and it is from their folktales that they establish

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21Flory, Review, 790; Frye, 310-13; Thompson, 160 !.

22 J. A. S. Evans, "The Dream of Xerxes and the Nomoi of the Persians," *Classical Journal* 57 (1961), 110.

an enabling and limiting horizon of action, and that their deeds follow from the understandings set forth in the *nomoi*.[23]

The relationship between knowing and believing is exploited instructively by Plato's Socrates in his *Apology*, to which West and West's translation-annotation draws our attention. Meditating on this exploitation by Plato, in the very complex context of the accusations against him that Socrates restates, we find helpful hints into the political problems Herodotus, an investigator of beliefs, confronts in his tasks of inquiry and representation. Although contemporaries, Herodotus and Plato's Socrates were not employing the same Greek. Any philological inquiry must acknowledge the limited scope of conclusions drawn from such evidence. It is not inappropriate to believe, however, that the relationship between the wisdom of particular individuals and that of their communities was uppermost among the concerns of both men, as they attended to knowledge and opinion within the horizons of belief, custom and law.

Socrates' restatement of the charges is only one of the reformulations of the indictment against him which Socrates makes in the *Apology*. As West point out, these restatements are not only modifications of Meletus' speeches, but also of the most likely original in Diogenes Laertius. The key discrepancy West notes is that the relationship between "belief in" and "introduction of" novel *daimonia* is manipulated by Socrates' reformulation. Approximate by Socrates' own admission, this version reverses the order of the impiety and corruption charges, but most importantly for us, reduces the corruption charges to nought by omitting the

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23Orwin, review, 900.

'introduction' of gods (Aristophanes: "bringing in," Xenophon: "carrying in"). The intimate interrelatedness of the impiety and corruption charges makes it difficult to see that, although this restatement is about novel *daimonia*, more importantly it is about whether Socrates' offense is confined to his own belief or whether is extends to introducing such heresies to others. (Plat. *Apol.* 26b) It might be that Socrates' main alleged offense is pedagogical rather than theological. This, however, is precisely what he complicates in this re-articulation.[24]

Later (26b), we find another complication of the belief question. After having led Meletus and the Assembly through the corruption as pedagogical, Socrates leads us through it again as a theological offence. Plato's Socrates continues to exploit the equivocal acknowledge/believe ambiguity in the subsequent examination of Meletus and his charges. "To believe in (*nomizein*) gods may be understood either as orthodoxy or as orthopraxy."[25] In this way, he can attribute to Meletus the seemingly absurd and obviously joking view ("Socrates does injustice by not believing in gods but by believing in gods" (27a) and yet preserve something nearer the position of the wisdom-lover: simultaneous orthopraxy and unorthodoxy. The Herodotean knowledge-seeker, however, preserves this duality with much greater difficulty. This reminds us of Herodotus' recurring interest: "what people habitually do to give expression to what they think of as right, or as sound."[26] Plato's Socrates challenges Meletus' conception of Socrates un/orthodoxy. Herodotus investigates praxis as the performance of

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24West, footnote #38 to 24b, in *Four Texts on Socrates*, trans. Thomas G. West and Grace Starry West (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984), 73.

25West, footnote #44 to 26b (edited), *Four Texts*, 76.

26Grene, *History*, 228.

doxa, without the same degree of distinction or interest in the dilemma of opinion and knowledge. As much as Meletus speaks for tradition, he articulates an Herodotean objection to Socrates' separation of correct deeds and correct beliefs.

Herodotus' *logos* as *apodexis*

> If everything turns out for the best, an author on paths of thinking can only point the way without being himself a wise man in the sense of *sophos*.[27]
>
> The Delphic god only indicates.[28]

As the novel embraces a certain chaos, and the anatomy encompasses free play, the *History* allows for a commensurate openness. The genre of Herodotus' *historiēs apodexis*, his inquiries set forth, we understand best by attending to the name Herodotus gives his account: *logos*. Although often rendered by translators as 'history,' in an understandable attempt to link the proem's 'inquiry' with the subsequent designations as 'account,' Herodotus' use of *logos* recalls its inclusiveness, and its broad standards of inclusivity. (q.v. 4.30). Different from the discriminating *histōr* role is that of the *logios*, the collector of spoken things.[29]

We thus confront the relationship that is central to Herodotus' understanding of inquiry, bridging Herodotus' account as a representation on the one hand, and as a re-

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27Martin Heidegger, "Forward," *Lectures and Essays* (1954) quoted in Krell, Introduction to *Early Greek Thinking*, by Martin Heidegger, trans. David Farrell Krell and Frank A. Capuzzi (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), 4.

28Heraclitus *frag.* 93, quoted in Friedrich Nietzsche, "On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life," in *Untimely Meditations*, trans. R. J. Holingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 122. Q.v. G. S. Kirk and J. E. Raven, eds. *Presocratic Philosophers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964), [s. 247] 211.

29Stanley Rosen, "Herodotus Reconsidered," *Herodotus: the histories: new translation, selection, backgrounds, commentaries* trans. Walter Blanco, eds. W. Blanco and Jennifer Tolbert (New York: Norton, 1992), 338.

performance of the deeds and speeches within it on the other. The word 're-presentation' hints at this apparent tension between signifying (symbols standing for, and pointing to) and enacting phenomena (in a performative speech-act). By preserving through re-enactment, Herodotus challenges the distinction between the constitutive and performative aspects of his written and spoken language. As John Ralston Saul has noted, "At the heart of the western tradition there is a tension between the oral and the written." In Herodotus we find a comprehensive articulation and confrontation of this dynamic, not only as a question of narrative style, but also as an issue in human perception within a variety of community horizons.[30]

What is strange and, because strange, interesting is the affinity of so-called postmodern questioning with the pre-Socratic sensibilities that follow from an investigation of and through Herodotus' *History*. The difficulties of recovering Herodotus' thought are compounded by his ambiguous place in genre and the tradition. If Herodotus had no successors in the same sense as Plato carried on Socrates' work, then he is isolated from us his students.[31] The postmodern resurgence of interest in the presocratics, notably by Nietzsche and Heidegger, reopens Herodotus to possible resonance and as a fertile field of investigation. With an alternative starting-point for history, philosophy, and political studies, other trajectories of transmission for the tradition may be articulated, and supplement Plato's Socrates with an Herodotean

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30 John Ralston Saul, *Reflections of a Siamese Twin* (Toronto: Penguin Canada, 1997), 208, 219-220. C.f. Marshall McLuhan "Oral-anal," "Verbal-voco-visual," and selections from *Understanding Media* in *Essential McLuhan* (Concord, Ontario: Anansi, 1995), 191, 193, et passism 149-188. 'Horizon' is an awkward visual term to render nomos as circumscribed space. Nomos is simultaneously like a melody and like a field; as a way and a place, it encompasses the range of habit and habitat.

31 R. G. Collingwood, *The Idea of History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), 28.

seeker in the genealogy of ancient political thought.

If Herodotus' Greek is mainly informed by a foundational tradition essential but antique to his fifth-century contemporaries, (e.g. Homer 2.116, Pindar 3.38, Aeschylus 2.156), then Heraclitus' use of 'logos' may illuminate that of Herodotus.[32] Herodotus' place among or outside the presocratic thinkers is open to critical debate. Herodotus is not another natural philosopher. Nor is he simply derivative. Our interesting challenge is to establish how Herodotus' social science anticipates that of Plato's Socrates, on the one hand, and (oddly) also that of modernity: not by inheritance by by innovation.

The *History* is not mainly a metaphysics, but is concerned with particular human activities in time-bounded situations. Although these activities have relationships to orders natural, supranatural and divine, Herodotus' concern is the knowable manifestation of the relationships. His concern with the root causes and shared responsibilities (*aitia*) of the Graeco-Persian conflict, drives him to consider and expose the great deeds (*ta megala erga*), and the things spoken (*ta legomena*) in the course of investigating phenomena and knowledge of events. As discussed above, even as he represents Pindar, to say that custom is king, Herodotus complicates the project of his inquiry and understanding. The different significance of Pindar's words in Herodotus' mouth warns us to be cautious in our appreciation of the *History* simply as a presocratic statement.

Rosen's account is most lucid on Herodotus' anti-Socratic, "pre-Parmenidian" concern with change and motion, *kinēsis*, as the essence of nature as *phusis*.[33] His reading grounds

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32Grene, Introduction to Herodotus, *History*, 32.

33Rosen, "Herodotus Reconsidered," 340-41.

Herodotus in the presocratic tradition, and as Rosen also notes, squares his investigative account with modern scientific sensibilities. Rosen also attributes the Herodotean schema to a modern, Machiavellian and Hobbesian view of science, positing nature as motion and change. In this light, the historian re-presents/reconfigures nature (*phusis*) as change/motion through an investigative account of custom and belief; *nomos* is a relatively stable horizon in which humans may live and may make reforms. Rosen summarizes the main point of presocratic wisdom by stressing that humans can slow down natural decay with the artifacts of custom and habitual behaviour. Art preserves us in the face of the reality of change.[34]

Rosen admittedly oversimplifies Herodotus' antagonism toward Socratic philosophy. While "Herodotus denies the eternal," and in doing so exposes the disjuncture between the human and divine mind, he seeks to retain or restore the instinctive human attraction for one's own *nomoi* as an instinct for health. Horizons are healthful. Conventional stillness is needed for human life in the face of change and chaos. Keeping in mind the metaphysics and political science of motion of both Machiavelli and Hobbes, Rosen persuades us to consider Herodotus' investigative account through descriptions of *nomos* and *logos* from Heraclitus.[35] The *nomos* that rules all *nomoi* is archetypal in its inclusivity and inaccessibility to complete knowledge through any particular one of the *nomoi*. The much-discussed context of *nomos basileus* (3.38) by establishing *nomos*, not as the norm itself, but as the "fountainhead of norms" shows

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34Stanley Rosen, *The Quarrel between poetry and philosophy: studies in ancient thought* (New York: Routledge, 1988), 30.

35Rosen, "Herodotus Reconsidered," 337-38, 342-343, 350; Keith, 346-47; Ostwald, 26-27.

Herodotus' *nomos* as consistent with that of Heraclitus.[36]

Here we must revisit the discussion of *nomos* as it relates to *logos*. Noting Herodotus' disinterest in distinguishing between written and unwritten *nomoi*, Ostwald draws our attention to Cambyses' inquiry into Persian law and characterizes the meaning of *nomos* there as a political one, consistent with a reading of *nomos* in the early Greek tradition as 'statute.' By showing Cambyses' feigned interest in the ancestral law, Herodotus shifts focus from the authority of ancestral customs to that of an unstable ruler.[37] The king's relationship to the law is peculiar: he is both a product of its traditional application and is the author of its future manifestation. He stands at the threshold of a horizon. This moves us in turn to Darius' experiment, where *nomos* takes on, in addition to a para-customary position (an umbrella over all particular customs), a mysterious (divine) character, about which all men have the same opinion (equal knowledge): that their own is best. (2.3, 3.38)[38]

Immerwahr, though often perceptive, errs in assessing Herodotus' logos. "I do not think Herodotus uses the word [logos] with any precision."[39] Rosen's reading of Heraclitus' fragment B 50 opens the possibility of investigating Herodotus in Heraclitean terms and opens the *History*, Herodotus' self-styled *logos*, to further consideration. Heidegger pushes us on to consider logos beyond its simplest formulations as saying and talking, and recovers the aspect

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36Ostwald, 27-28; Heraclitus, fragment 114, *Presocratic Philosophers*, [s. 253] 213. C.f. Grene, endnote to Hdt. 3.38, *History*, 666-67.

37Ostwald, footnote #1, *Nomos*, 47.

38Grene, endnote to Hdt. 2.3, *History*, 666-67.

39Immerwahr, footnote #11, "Historical Action," 21. J. E. Powell, *A Lexicon to Herodotus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958) details 447 incidents of more than 15 usages of logos.

of bringing together, "the laying-down and laying-before which gathers itself and others." A hint of this meaning is preserved in the English word 'anthology': a collection of flowers. Pursuing this further, we find that such a gathering is more than an aggregate of disparate elements, and is an accommodation fostered by safekeeping. Thus Herodotus' *logos* emerges as a safe-house of great deeds, for it is the preservation and keeping of the stories that has prompted our author to seek them out.[40]

Thus Heidegger leads us into the problem of how *logos*, by laying-gathering-together comes to be understood as a 'saying.' In this vein, it is the laying and the saying that make manifest, unconcealed, the great deeds and the reasons (*aitia*) for the Greek-barbarian war. What Heidegger is so keen to show is that *logos*, understood as the gathering-laying-together, is original, and although superseded by the predominant reading of *logos* as saying and speech, remains the essential and overarching meaning of *logos*. In this way, by distinguishing the original laying from the subsequent saying, Heidegger's Heraclitus supplements the view of language as mere expression.[41]

What remains to inform our view of Herodotus' project, is that the *logos* is at once the "Laying that gathers" (*die lesende Lege*) and an exhibiting, telling. In this way, the language of Herodotus' *History* is less an articulation, more a dwelling-place, where deeds and speeches are let-lie-before, present in their presencing. A representation of language as expression is not incorrect, but is incomplete. Where Heidegger leads us to the brink of the essence of language

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40Martin Heidegger, "Logos," in *Early Greek Thinking*, trans. David Farrell Krell and Frank A. Capuzzi (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), 60-61.

41Heidegger, "Logos," 63-64, 77.

as the essence of Being, we must follow, taking up Herodotus' account even as its speaker-author qualifies his own authority.[42] The narrator's self-presencing in and through the report itself, which sets forth the investigation and all that it uncovers, is a performance narrative, an *apodexis*. This hints at why free speech emerges as the important element of political inquiry for Herodotus. To the degree that Herodotus' speech is open to diversity, it can fulfil its role as a gathering.

Discussing *thumos* and *logos*, Keith notes that human speech is, for Herodotus, the first stone in our reconstruction of ourselves in the world. Add to this Thompson's notion that Herodotus presents 'story' as basically constitutive of community, and we have the rudimentary tools and artistry of civilization. Not only might we be a *logopoios* (5.35, 2.134, 2.143), 'chronicler' or storyteller, and have our counsel perhaps heeded, perhaps, not, but moreover we might be poets of ourselves and our communities through spirited speech. Thus speech (*logos*) is the art, which all humans share, by which communities understand their beliefs and customs (*nomos*) through their very articulation – and enact these as the living word upon the living world.[43]

The artful use of speech to articulate the beliefs, customs and stories forms a healthful horizon for human habitation. With *nomos* as this kind of *technē*, the *History* is a 'nomizotics,' articulating "(a science of changeable) beliefs and knowledge" in order to understand an art of politics (*politeiai*-cs) more primitive and comprehensive than the eternal things of the city. Against the tendency of the Greek mind, which followed Socrates' quest for immutable objects

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42Heidegger, "Logos," 77-78.

43Keith, 186; Thompson, 167.

of knowledge, Herodotus' genius triumphed for a time. And may yet again.[44] By granting a more complex and expansive horizon, renovated with the vitality of myth-making, politics becomes an art more about healthful education rather than skilled leadership or organization. Where nature is the first necessity, nomos is the second, which comes to stand in place of the first. We must teach and be taught our 'second natures.' In this light, beliefs and customs (*nomoi*) are the rudimentary technology ('arts-gathering') that is symbolized and spoken. Herodotus is concerned throughout with the uses and disadvantages of *nomos*, while recognizing and presenting their creation, transmission and transfiguration in different circumstances. This transformative power unleashed by an inquiry into beliefs and their influence is amazing and perilous. Where nature imposes necessities on human beings, we in turn impose changes on nature.[45]

In the only example of ancient innovation he elaborates, Ortega y Gasset refers to Herodotus' description of the Egyptian lake at Moeris (2.148-149). This ancient marvel is meant to undermine the current conviction (1941) that no great technological setback might occur, that no fall might follow the ascendancy of post-industrial innovation. Making use of Herodotus in this particular way shows an astute sense of the *History*. Much in keeping with our author's temperament is Gasset's twofold purpose: showing the historian's role as an iconoclast, in Herodotus' case challenging the grandeur of Greek arts and engineering with that

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44Eugene F. Miller: "What 'Political' Means," *Review of Politics* (1980), 62-63; Collingwood, *Idea*, 29.

45Rousseau develops an account of the origins of language that seems indebted to Herodotus. Speech is of poetic/melodic origin rather than from the necessity of rational expression, or 'communication.' Original human speech is the cry of nature excited by an intuition of our vulnerability. Jean-Jaques Rousseau, Second Discourse, in *First and Second Dicsourses*, trans. Rodger D. and Judith R. Masters (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1964), 122. C.f. *Essaie sur l'origines des langues*.

of the Egyptians, and the fundamentally cyclical character of events.[46]

Herodotus' keen interest in technological marvels, though especially in evidence in the Egyptian *logos*, is sustained throughout the ethnologic first half of the *History*. Herodotus' recurring interest in marvels is, of course, part of his intention to save great deeds from losing fame. Herodotus' investigative *apodexis* (1.1) is linked to his declaration (*apodexasthai*) about this great achievement (*ergōn apodexin*). (2.101)

Although Lake Moeris is described as a great achievement, it is also, however, part of the equivocal category of deeds that are twin with the limits of human agency and fortune that Herodotus develops throughout the *History*. For example, Xerxes' merely arrogant demonstration of his power (*dunamin apodexnusthai*, 7.24) with an unnecessary water-works is part of his over-extension of similar faculties at work under the Egyptian king Moeris.

Gasset suggests, "technology is man's reaction upon nature or circumstance," and this endeavour, by reforming nature, mediates our needy character with the imposition of 'supernature.' Beyond the animal necessities of biological life lie the grander aspirations of 'well-being.' Human use and abuse of technological ability, in a more primitive context, stands out from the instinctive norms of merely animal behaviour as an extraordinary art. Though perhaps stressing the creative power of human being more than Herodotus would, neglecting troublesome realities such as real hunger and cold, Ortega poses appropriate questions for Herodotus' students. To what degree is "human life in its most human dimension a work of fiction?" "Is man a sort of novelist of himself who conceives the fanciful figure of a

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46Jose Ortega y Gasset, "Man the Technician," in *History as a System: and other essays towards a philosophy of history*, trans. Helene Weyl (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1961), 104-105.

personage with its unreal occupations and then, for the sake of converting it into reality, does the things he does – and becomes an engineer?"[47]

This touches his use of Herodotus particularly because he tells us that Herodotus' tale of Lake Moeris was long thought to have been a fable. By interweaving the stories thus, Ortega winks at Herodotus by playing at the kind of narrative inquiry that Herodotus best mastered. Moreover he also links the human capacity for story-telling with human's practical technical skill, and places these in a relationship that must be considered as possibly that of Herodotus himself. By stressing the life of action as primary, though dependent on prior thought, Ortega and Herodotus offer an image of human beings as fabricating and self-fabricating creatures. "Fundamentally life is not, as has been believed for so many centuries, contemplation, thinking theory, but action."[48]

Part of this action, however, is the telling of history that is necessary for comprehension. In this way, Ortega's appeal for a shift from "physico-mathematical reason" to "narrative reason" presents a parallel movement as that Herodotus appears to make from Eleatic ontology. As Rosen also uncovers, despite Herodotus' affinity with Homer and Heraclitus, he neither simply replays the presocratic, nor steps into the "magic circle" that imprisons the tradition as it follows from a Socratic-Parmenidean "radical intellectualization of being." Although Herodotus is not mentioned by name, it is likely that Ortega holds him among the "notable rebellions" against the "Greek destiny that still weighs on us." Despite being an innovation of fifth-century Greek genius, rightly placed aside those of other

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47Ortega y Gasset, "Man," 95, 147, 108.

48 Gasset, "Man," 116.

luminaries, "[Herodotus] achievement," as Collingwood suggests, "ran so strongly contrary to the current of Greek thought that it did not long survive its creator."[49]

49Ortega y Gasset, "History as a System," in *History as a System*, 214, 192, 195; Collingwood, 28.

They're all Greeks to me: Interpretive Methodologies & Questions

> Herodotus foregrounds objects without controlling their meaning because, like the deconstructing Amasis, he knows that the meaning of things is very likely to be multiple [...] Herodotus often does not tell us what things mean but pulls us into the interpretive space, asking us, like himself, to remain aware of the potential objects have to become meaningful, and also the possibility that their appearance will mislead.[1]

There are perhaps as many approaches to as there are students of Herodotus. Recognizing Herodotus' dissociation from our fifth-century inheritance, an attempt to categorize schools of methodology can only reasonably classify broad 'attitudes' towards our author. Like the *nomos*- and *logos*-based communities featured in the *History*, our attitudes towards Herodotus act upon and through the scholarship as give our testimony, constructing interpretations. Approaches to the *History* depend largely on varying articles of scholarly faith as to Herodotus' narrative persona and the purposes of his progress through the material of the *History*. Our inquiries must attend to Herodotus' own investigation, those of the *History*'s seekers (as represented by Herodotus) and the analyses and attitudes of commentators.

Contrasting readings of any particular Herodotean story show the scope of interpretive attitudes. The Egyptian king Amasis, in an attempt to prove that he, of lowly birth, was as fit to rule as anyone, has a foot-bath reconstituted as an idol. (Hdt. 2.172). For Carolyn Dewald, as she discusses the construction of meaning in Herodotus' story-contexts, the king's use of the foot-bath shows the power and mutability of symbolic meaning. His acceptance of the king's helmet shows the same characteristic mutability of representation (2.162). Similar to Dewald's

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1Carolyn Dewald, "Reading the World," in *Nomodeikes: Studies in Honor of Martin Ostwald*, ed. R. M. Rosen and J. Farrell (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993), 70.

readings of Herodotus' readable objects, C. W. Hedrick, Jr. stresses that because objects, like deeds, need naming to become intelligible, the spoken and heard overtake the seen as the comprehensive metaphor of intelligibility. By "calling objects to witness," the eye-witnessing attends to the statement of testimony, belief or intelligence. Benardete, on the other hand develops a reading indebted to Aristotle, and sees in Amasis an attention to mere appearance that characterizes the Egyptian, but not Herodotean understanding of symbols. (Aristotle, *Politics* 1.12)

In keeping with his intensive, close reading interpretation of Herodotus to discover nature through the veil of convention, Benardete focusses, not on the extent of Amasis' transformation, but on the integration of opposites that Herodotus executes so well, stressing the understanding that can grasp the intimate connection of the opposite, without collapsing the distinction or being blind to one aspect or the other. Nobility and baseness co-exist. To integrate these two views, we have recourse to Herodotus' statement that out of the low comes greatness and by turns the great decays (1.5). Witness stresses the importance of distinction despite its artifice. Herodotus' witnessing has a synthetic effect through the activity of investigation. More than a mute object or scholastic subject, history is an activity.[2]

If there are discernable patterns in the scholarly approaches to Herodotus, particularly as we narrow our focus to exclude students of geography and archeology, two seem common

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2C. Hedrick Jr., "Material Culture," in *Nomodeikes: Studies in Honor of Martin Ostwald*, eds. R. M. Rosen and J. Farrell (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993), 26. Seth Benardete, *Herodotean Inquiries* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1970), 66-67. On problematic opsis, c.f. C. Dewald, "Narrative Surface and Authorial Voice in Herodotus' History." *Arethusa* 20 (1987), 158-159. Dewald's framework is akin to the attention to social role-playing and meaning-making figures in François Hartog, *The Mirror of Herodotus: the representation of the in the writing of history*, trans. J. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988). C.f. C. Dewald. "Women and Culture in Herodotus' Histories," *Women's Studies* 8 (1981), 93-127.

enough to serve as models for our inquiry here. To uncover and establish as important and interesting a theme that Herodotus exploits and extend it as a conceit throughout the *History*, though giving a partial reading of the text as a whole, does afford the student a comprehensive glimpse of one aspect of the *History*. To establish such a theme, a commentator usually takes a single story that is by context, placement or content particularly striking or confusing, and develops from it a working model of an Herodotean theme. Thus the interpretation speaks, just as the stories speak, and the endeavour of inquiry itself speaks. The fullness of its meaning is it claim to truth; rich endures better than right, in the sense of accurate.[3]

Addressing Herodotus in a more thematic and interpretive framework rather than one married to modern scientific schema, we uncover his vitality and playfulness. Insisting that "an author does not change genres from page to page, writing fiction about one event and alleged history about another," Pritchett denies that Herodotus could be writing in any vein similar to Jonathan Swift. Despite this denial, Pritchett does admit that Herodotus might share some of Swift's spirit, though not a similar hatred of humanity. It is, however, precisely Herodotus' fictionalizing spirit that most illuminates the genre question, a question whose importance strikes only part of the Herodotean scholarly community.[4] Herodotus' narrator could be said to resemble Swift's Gulliver, distancing author, narrator, text and reader in a way that permits the interweaving of fact and fantasy in a text-space where the reader must launch his or her

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3C.f. Claude Levi-Strauss, "The Structural Study of Myth," *Journal of American Folklore* 68 (1955, Washington: American Folklore Society).

4Walter K. Pritchett, *Liar School of Herodotus* (Amsterdam: J. G. Giben, 1993), 330-31. Q.v. "In his [Herodotus'] work we confront full blown the problem of the genre." Carolyn Dewald and John Marincola, "Selective Introduction," *Arethusa* 20 (1987), 25; c.f. W. R. Connor ""Commentary,"" *Arethusa* 20 (1987), 256.

own inquiries.

Pritchett's anti-fictionalist attitude is born out of his expertise. The comprehensivity of his minute and intimate involvement with the material culture of classical archeology and ancient Greek history impairs his judgement of Herodotus in a narrative and interpretive framework. As we develop an application of the anatomy model we must move beyond merely verifying and refuting Herodotus' actuality and embrace a more interpretive rather than objective attitude. In the broadest view of the *History*, we see Herodotus changing genres, attempting to understand a variety of phenomena - some observed, some overheard, some seen, some imagined.[5] As might be expected, this vast, interpretive unpacking has given Herodotus an checkered reputation.

If the lack of consensus on Herodotus' purpose in writing the *History* was insufficient to destroy his reputation, Thucydides' pronouncement against his anecdotal type of history undermined Herodotus' legitimacy as a scientist of history. The new discipline, as defined through Thucydides' work, had no business in long past, and so unverifiable, accounts nor in the realms of foreign-speaking peoples. History, becoming a more narrowly focussed enterprise, was sceptical of the possibility of understanding non-Greek speakers. By narrowing the field of inquiry to exclude 'others,' non-Herodotean history proposed to anchor the study of human affairs with greater certainty. The recurring objection to Herodotus' project is the mutability of his foundations for knowledge, and his stance toward the worth and possible uses

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5Pritchett, *Liar School*, 5, 9; Norma Thompson, *Herodotus and the Origins of Political Community* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 58-60.

of what limited knowledge is possible.[6]

After suffering much, Herodotus' reputation improved in the Renaissance and moved towards rehabilitation. He was not a malicious deceiver but a naive reporter of his observations. This opinion, mapped over with nods to Herodotus' so-called piety, holds considerable force to this day. More than any single scholar, Sir J. L. Myres is responsible for the tenacity of notions about Herodotus' piety, and thus the character and *naïveté* of Herodotus' interest in the great variety of religious customs he records with deference if not respect. Through the nineteenth century, Herodotus' reputation sank from interest while the exploration of his sources of information came into focus. This led Egyptologists and archaeologists towards a better appreciation of Herodotus' deft handling of his data. Modern materialist apologists for Herodotus point to his situation *vis à vis* sources, noting his scientific shrewdness and integrity.[7] What is important to draw from this aspect of the materialist schools is this shrewdness; not whether it leads to an account that could later be verified or falsified by archeological excavation or paleo-ethnography, but as an exemplary methodology of critical comparison. In this way the *History* becomes a training manual, with an important caveat of contingency, for seekers after knowledge about the world. Herodotus uncovers meaning (*noos*), as Benardete suggests, that endures within the customary and narrative horizons of human beings.

6Sir John Arthur Evans, "Father of History or Father of Lies, the reputation of Herodotus," *Classical Journal* 64 (1968), 11-12; Benardete, 30; Arnaldo Momigliano, "The Place of Herodotus in the History of Historiography," *History* 43 (1958), 4.

7Sir John Linton Myres, *Herodotus, Father of History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1953). Evans, "Father," 15.

> There was no necessity nor can there be for the link between the *logoi* which are the condition for the *logos* and the *logos* itself. The grace of things, their *charis*, which admits an insight into those things is finally inexplicable.[8]

More important to Herodotus' ancient reputation was the shift in understanding war and international events, in which Herodotus' type of appreciation for the reason and responsibilities behind fighting had no place (*aitia*, 1.1). Even in the next chapter (1.2), Herodotus begins his account by presenting several versions of the initial falling-out between the Greeks and Persians. This range of "antagonism" as a category contextualizes the subsequent conflict, and serves as a background to the differences that will characterize the nations represented in the *History*. From these complex relationships disputes develop that might be settled in variety of ways in addition to making war. (c.f. 4.23, 7.3, 7.9)

Conflict rather than contact, however, took on a new and growing importance. Strife came to be understood as part of the expansionism natural to human communities, and war to be viewed as a natural phenomenon. The dynamics of the strong ruling the weaker was a more appropriate study. Herodotus' vivid style and literary skill made him suspect in the emerging atmosphere of seriousness. The kinship of Herodotus' stated objective to "record deeds" to the epic poetry tradition was collapsed into the notion that the *History* was mainly and merely for entertainment. Herodotus' vision encompassed more than state-focussed international relations and Realpolitik. While non-Herodotean historians have not traditionally seen anthropology, sociology or psychology as relevant to the causes of war, Herodotus regarded humankind as a complex of nations with customs and ways of life, and as individuals with appetites for

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8 Benardete, *Inquiries*, 36, 29-31.

vengeance and retaliation. Herodotus' account of community-building and cultural conflict encompasses and extends beyond traditional Thucydidean reading of sovereignty and conflict, to present an understanding of war and political history that is informed by the richness and complexity of individual and national character.[9]

The interest in this century in diverse societies has made Herodotus less isolated from historical tradition than at any point in the line of his reputation. Ideas about historically valid writing and perception have come to accept Herodotus more fully than ever. The *History*'s methodology now seems to be more legitimate historiography. Interpretive anthropologists, sociologists and students of folklore are exploring oral traditions in a way sympathetic to Herodotus' investigations. Like Mabel Lang, John Gould points to Herodotus' indebtedness to the oral, poetic tradition he uses to shape his prose. Herodotus often deals in "might" or "could have" happened, instead of "did" or "would," in order to move the narrative along. This reflects an idiosyncrasy of oral traditions, and reminds us of Thucydides' reconstructive approach: "Things were described as they should be, not as they were." Herodotus' genius lies in the ease with which he thinks and formulates in terms of genealogies and mythological traditions, and his familiarity with social memory, community history and folk wisdom in oral tradition. Folkloric research interests allowed students to better appreciate Herodotus' artful manipulation of his material, and his purposive performance of his narrative character. Acknowledging the difference between living a tradition and investigating one focusses on the

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9Evans, "Father," 16-17; Laurie M. Johnson, *Thucydides, Hobbes and the Interpretation of Realism* (Northern Illinois University Press, 1993), 212-215.

enterprise of interpretation from within and without.[10]

The importance of Herodotus' "ethnography as access to history" is the role that the radically other plays in helping us articulate a view of ourselves, and thus in the interpretive process of synthesizing our own and other perspectives. The connection Lateiner makes with Herodotus' project is important because of Herodotus' underlying research interest in the 'own.' The "other" is primary, but the final point is the own, and the effect that is produced on the home audience. In one sense Herodotus uses "extravagant otherness" to challenge his readers and students to consider their own shortcomings, and to imagine the possibility that "a conscientious investigator using his own heritage as a standard by which to discuss others' success and failure, efficiency, sophistication, science and so on, can transcend parochialism."

Social critique is not the whole purpose of Herodotus' use of own and otherness; he also leads us to confront the manifold difficulties in translating experience from the mysterious and unknown into the understood and practicable. Although Lateiner extends the rhetoric of alterity to establish the other as a tool of social critique of the own, he assumes the simple identity of Herodotus and the Greek, and neglects the mutability of these types, each giving voice to each other's views. With the artifice of types named 'Greek' and 'Persian,' Herodotus establishes and keeps distance among himself, his audience, the other and any supposed identity of his own.[11] Precisely because Herodotus' historical logos encompasses so many

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10Evans "Father," 17; Mabel Lang, 1-2, 21-36; Sara Mandell, "The Language, Eastern Sources and Literary Posture of Herodotus," *Ancient World* 20 (1990), 105; John Gould, *Herodotus* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987), 19.

11 Donald Lateiner, *The Historical Method of Herodotus* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989), 145, 157; Clifford Geertz, "Being There,"" and "Us/Not-us" in *Works and Lives: the anthropologist as author* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1988), 113, 127-8; 105-108. This own-other identification challenge resonates with the 'Golden Rule' teaching. An imaginative identification with the other is a revolutionary proposition, as it

diverse and shifting ways of being and understanding, it is amenable to a great wealth of interpretation, and can thus survive a repeated use and abuse.

To the partiality that insists on its own as best (3.38, 7.152), which the historian shares with his fellows, the storyteller adds the possibility of multiple accounts, and thus the ability to look critically at his own bias in light of another viewpoint. At the most fundamental level, the tension between discussion and judgment turns on whether one can base a judgment of success and failure on the "nature of things" as accessible by human reason. If yes, the freedom of a philosophical perspective could allow access to the 'divine ordering mind.' If not, the best use of one's own as a standard for judgment ought to be self-reflexive and sceptical, ever equal to defense or abandonment in the face of challenge or improvement.

Herodotus' includes ethnography in his account to form a hypothesis to explain the conflict between Greeks and non-Greeks, and the Greek victory. In both cases it is customs that provide the explanation. Cause and responsibility (*aitia*) are not understood simply by explaining cause-and-effect relationships, but through the differences between cultures. Herodotus' ethnographic writing of the Greek-barbarian dichotomy prevalent in Greek mythography goes beyond mere partisanship. Herodotus' praise of others' habits does not endorse their adoption. They are intended to cast a questioning and critical light not only on the ways of the Greeks, but on the ways of all human beings. Plutarch draws our attention to the unconventionality of "Herodotus the *philobarbaros*," and thus stresses the *History*'s

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undermines traditional loyalties and identities. Although Herodotus does not present Christ's radical position, in which the hated become beloved, reconfigured relationships are fraught with tensions. Rev. M. Ansley Tucker, Sermon, Church of the Redeemer, Toronto, Ontario Sunday, 1 November 1998. C.f. Benardete *Inquiries*, 14-15 on Gyges, Hdt. 1.8-12.

outward-looking lesson. The ethnological participant-observer model for our inquiry overcomes insularity. Herodotus, and the analogous seekers in the *History* are interrelated agents manufacturing the account.[12] The *History*'s text-space is our field of exploration and the seekers are for us to follow in our inquiry; we engage Herodotus' sources as part of the re-performance of the inquiry. The role of *logios* is reserved for Herodotus and the storykeepers he engages, but the reader-audience, in their place as co-histōrs help enact the enterprise. Herodotus' audience members become fellow travellers, investigators and rhapsodes of social science.

Herodotus considers the customs of various nations as evidence of their strategies of inquiry. Each national *nomos* is not in itself comprehensive, but only a partial questioning. Each world-view has what Heidegger might call its own "piety of thought," bounded by a gathering of ideas, an ideology.[13] This thought is not put forth by each community as thought, but as *nomos*, as a belief or customary way of thinking. Following the lead of his sources, Herodotus prefers, rather than casting his own logos in terms of nature, to frame his showing forth of human affairs in the terms of conflicting and interpenetrating world-views: at once resistant and reticent, even hostile, and yet related to one another. Within the metaphor of performative speech and its relationship to human action and understanding, Herodotus provides his audience with the means to conceptualize its relationships to fellows and

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12Lateiner, *Method*, 152; Plutarch, *The Malice of Herodotus*, trans. Anthony Bower (Warminster, England: Aris and Phillips, 1992), 29, 108-109. Plutarch's repeated and emphatic misrepresentation of Herodotus, especially on the issue of what accounts Herodotus does and does not attribute to others, supports Keith's view that Plutarch means his book to provide reading hints. Sydney Keith, "Herodotus: The First Political Scientist," (Ph.D. diss., University of Toronto, 1989), 42.

13Martin Heidegger, "Question Concerning Technology," in *Basic Writings*, trans. David F. Krell (New York: Harper Collins, 1977), 317.

strangers. Concerned with the language of understanding, Herodotus' *logos* enables the distinct world-views to become more than customary observances, and represents them enacting and articulating alternative worlds.

Free and equal speech in the *History* is a practical Greek strategy of self-rule, determined to be a good not for the higher intellectual attractions of a 'market-place of ideas,' but for its feature of allowing flourishing and accretion. (5.58) Over time, human communities prosper through their passive imperialism, not in their reticence or conquest. Herodotus' individuals articulate an understanding of themselves within the language horizons of their community. If Herodotus is part of the tradition of political philosophy, his concern with the epistemological as part of the practical places him there. The means by which the *History*'s peoples attend to and articulate their worlds form and inform their political strategies for managing their own affairs, and for interacting with others - a large and complex Herodotean category - inside and outside their borders. A defense of a philosophical Herodotus rests less on subsuming him to a Socratic or Platonic representation of the philosophical enterprise, but on a defense of poetic history as access to wisdom. Although the kinship of philosophy and history seems to lie in their poetry and in their art, the use and aim of this art appears to have changed considerably from Homer to Herodotus to Plato.[14] The interpretive space that Herodotus creates with his logos, allows monumental, antiquarian and critical inquiry to co-exist. Although Nietzsche's terms do not align precisely with the Greek, Egyptian and Persian modes of inquiry that Herodotus preserves in this *History*, his lament is as able an apology for

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14Stanley Rosen, *The Quarrel between Philosophy and Poetry* (New York: Routledge, 1988), 30.

Herodotus as any. For,

> only if history can endure to be transformed into a work of art will it perhaps be able to preserve instincts or even evoke them. Such historiography would, however, be altogether contrary to the analytical and inartistic tendencies of our time, which would declare it false.[15]

In order to properly understand the advantage of the Greek *isegoria* we are led through the world-views and strategies of various neighbouring peoples, with special emphasis on the interrelations among the Egyptian, Scythian, Persian and Greek ways of life. Herodotus places the Greek achievement not only in its proper context as a worthy innovation, but also in light of its debts to the non-Greeks (*barbaroi*). Herodotus singles out the Greeks for praise while cautioning those who will be his students about the dangers to which human beings are subject. The limited wisdom that we might wrench from the complex phenomena of the world, represented with consummate skill by the text-event of the *History*, is meant to serve us in attending to the difficult lives we all must lead.

For Herodotus, the use of speech is the basic touchstone of humanity. (4.183-184) Human variety stems from the diversity of customary strategies of inquiry: apprehension and manufacture of the ways of life and horizons. Greek free and equal speech constitutes a community in a way different from, though superior to and indebted to those of their Mediterranean neighbours. We will see the important role investigators (chroniclers, mediators, interpreters and priests) play in forming the climate of openness that forms and

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15Friedrich Nietzsche, "On the uses and disadvantages of history for life," in *Untimely Meditations*, trans. R. J. Holingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), s. 7, 95-96. Nietzsche indicates that ancient historiography is the beacon for his analysis. Although his terms, as applied to Herodotus, do not fit perfectly, they better allow us to grasp the overall unity of Herodotus' seemingly incongruous historical genres.

informs Herodotus' own endeavour, and constitues the Greeks' success. Such openness is not, however, without risks. *Apodexis* focuses on speech as a performative use of language-as-deed; in Herodotus' case it is an investigative deed. To engage the *History* on this use of language we must attend to the variety of ways in which the investigative deed is enacted through the ways of life of its characters.

Herodotus as an *histōr-logios*; Herodotus' investigators and storykeepers

The accustomed beliefs and vocation of the seeker and presenter of knowledge are variations on the theme of his character. To consider substantive issues we focus on the thematic approach by which commentators call a seeker's character to witness, and by which commentators themselves are called to witness by each other. By presenting performers and seekers, Herodotus' provides the building materials from which we may assemble an understanding of the family resemblances among *logios-histōrs*.

In Arion's leap, as read by Benardete, Herodotus treats *nomos* as music, a tune which Arion uses to please his captors, affirm his identity as a rhapsode and even summon a dolphin-saviour. Benardete's insight on this aspect of the *nomoi*, as enactment and affirmation, is rooted in the character's identity. If we follow Benardete further from the performance aspect of *apodexis*, the author of a collection of melodies such as the *History* would also be a performance poet, "another Arion." Thompson's subtitle is "Arion's Leap," and her Afterword is a representation of that story. Despite her concluding scepticism as to the possibility of understanding Herodotus on his own terms, Thompson hears Herodotus approving evaluation of the seeker beyond, who, in order to be cautiously bold, must resort to

poetry. She also accepts and forwards Herodotus' challenge to wander and wonder outside the customary. "In our time, to be able to conceive of a poetic historian who is philosophically engaging is to think the impossible." Herodotus' own tune, his *logos*, leads him and his audience from the affirmation of accustomed tradition to the exploration of its facts and fictions, its beliefs and errors. Herodotus' imitation of simultaneous unveiling and concealing in his stories enjoys and exploits this dual character of the *nomos*-tune.[16]

Even if the *History* is epistemologically sophisticated enough to warrant an investigation of Herodotus' interpreters and chroniclers as trailblazers on the path of the story, a lexicon-driven text analysis risks over-emphasizing a kind of linguistic coherence that may obscure other indications Herodotus gives us. Particular usages, therefore, must rise above the heap of word-uses that we find in the *History*. On *nomos*, Benardete drew our attention to the story of Arion's leap (1.24). On *logos*, it is instructive to consider that Herodotus calls his own enterprise his *logos* rather than his "inquiry." To select from the proem, we should prefer to include the whole of *historiēs apodexis* thus entitling Herodotus' epic, teaching *logos*: "Inquiries Performed."[17]

Benardete's inquires follow Herodotus' poetics from custom to nature (*phusis*), and he concludes that the uncovery of nature completes the Herodotean *logos*. In addition to this movement from custom to nature, there is that toward *logos*, the speech that represents, and thus completes nature. Custom is thus made 'natural' through the project of poetic history. The interwoven character of things naturally, artifactually and conventionally human, is stated

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16Benardete, 15-6; Thompson, 167, 165; Hdt., 1.24.

17On *apodexthena*, q.v. Ian Plant, "A neglected emphasis in Herodotus' preface," *Eos* 79 (1991), 13-15.

provocatively by Heidegger: "*Phusis* is indeed *poiēsis* in the highest sense."[18] Properly understood, Herodotus' investigative story encompasses both custom and nature. His *logos* must be considered, as an exposition of speech-acts and as an emergent speech-act itself. The story is not only conceptual and heuristic, but is also a deed setting forth great deeds, so that time may not cause them to become unreported. Like nomos, slowing down the ravages of natural decay, history as poetry thwarts nature by allowing custom to be reformed. Because of the potential thus invested in the account, the issue of its method, approaches and attitude is critical.

The modern temptation to render nomos with 'culture,' and thus reproduce its dichotomy with nature, is well corrected with 'way of life.' Such a term not only better embraces performative as well as signifying language, but also acknowledges the dynamic equilibrium of the *nomos-phusis* spectrum Herodotus represents. *Liebensform* captures the identity-aspect of the *nomos*-tune, Arion's rhapsodic way of life and our historian's poetry, but also properly leads us to the corollary of the *liebensform*, the *sprachespiel* or speech-game coincident with it. Arion's example shows a bold rhapsode "walking the walk" as he "talks the talk," or sings the shrill song. Herodotus is thus the analogic rhapsode in the act of setting forth an investigative interaction with multiple sources. In this connection we may consider the *History* as more than a writing and reading event, as an engagement with and re-performance of the deeds and stories it presents. Thus we, Herodotus' students, must engage Herodotus'

18Heidegger, "Question Concerning Technology," 293.

chroniclers and interpreters.[19]

The multiple meanings encompassed by Herodotus' varied usage of *nomos* has engendered important works of detailed interpretive translation. It is Giraudeau who points the way toward understanding the symbiotic relationship between custom and the use of language. Her notions about bridging custom and nature through attention to nomos-language, are crucial to our study. She works towards an understanding of nomos under the rubric of language by first attending to some of the variety in Herodotus' usage. She overlays the range of customary clothes, habits and taboos with language. When considered from the historian's view-point, national and individual natures are as varied as 'characters,' and are subsumed by the performative poetry of linguistic re-presentation. Character, custom and nature are properly present only within the investigative *logos*. Coupled with Benardete's account of *nomos* as tune, these provide our guidelines for uncovering the customary language of investigative melodies in Herodotus.[20]

Although Giraudeau's analysis mistakenly overstates Herodotus' account from nature, a common fault in the interpretive literature, she allows for a more ambiguous role; this allows us to glimpse Herodotus as he might have seemed before the tradition of a nature-custom axis

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19Mabel Lang, *Herodotean Narrative and Discourse* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984) 18; Gregory Nagy, "Herodotus the logios," *Arethusa* 20 (1984), 175-6. Ludwig Wittgestein, *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. G. E. M. Anscombe (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1967), [ss. 19, 23, 241], pp. 8e, 11e, 88e.

20Michèle Giraudeau, *Notions juridiques et sociales chez Hérodote: étude sur le vocabulaire* (Paris: Diffusions Boccard, 1984), 120-123, 124. At times Giraudeau over-emphasizes the limits provided by nature and necessity. She credits Herodotus with attending on the birth of the notion of human nature (anthrōpinē phusis) in spheres physical, moral and philosophical (e.g. Hdt. 2.45, 8.83, 3.65), even as she acknowledges that Herodotus envisions the possibility of custom pushing humans past their natural limits, to be "better than their natures."" (Hdt. 7.103)

replaced a *nomos-phusis* spectrum. What standard is appropriate to judge the customary manipulation and reconfiguration of nature? From his pre-Parmenidean heritage Herodotus adopts the notion that the source of human freedom is the chaos of our origins, and in this our nature, as manifest through the malleability of our customs, is changeable. The tension Rosen wishes to maintain, however, cannot be easily maintained. "*Nomos* rules, not because of the absence of *phusis*, but because *phusis* is *kinesis*."[21] Fate or fortune, its understanding and it's mastery, rather than nature, is the appropriate study of human beings. Because there is a fluid equilibrium between the influence of nature on custom and custom on nature (e.g. in Egypt and Sparta respectively), disciplined students make their way towards accommodating themselves to fate; communities, who also must prepare against fortune, may do so through the rigorous discipline of custom or law. As we shall see in considering Persia, and as Rosen notes and yet oddly seems to resist, tyranny is commensurate with inquiry. The goal is one of self-knowledge and self-mastery with a view to reforming oneself in light of changing horizons of the world. By changing his nature, the prince could keep his constant.[22]

To the charge of key-word scholarship, Herodotus' students may be particularly susceptible. Confronted with the size, scope and complexity of the narrative, and the insufficiency of even the best structural analyses as helpful guides, Herodotus students are, to a certain degree, left adrift if they hope to make particular sense of any single passage, chapter

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21Rosen, "Herodotus Reconsidered," 340-341; Giraudeau, 131-132. Discussing Hippocrates' affinity with Herodotus' ethnology Ostwald suggests that "a nomos becomes a phusis." Martin Ostwald, *Nomos and the Beginnings of the Athenian Democracy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), 35.

22Giraudeau, 131-32; Rosen, "Herodotus Reconsidered," 350, 356. Niccolo Machiavelli, Chapters 18 and 25, *The Prince*, trans. Daniel Donno (New York: Bantam Classic, 1981), 63, 85-86.

or story, though perhaps less so when they confront the broad lines of the larger narratives within the *History*. Strangely enough, though perhaps not so strange to us once we broach the surface of the *History*, it is the more thematic or interpretive inquiries into Herodotus' inquiries that yield the most and the most precious fruit to his audience.

In questions of substance we confront questions of approach. Herodtus' approach is a large part of the substance of his account. In engaging Herodotus selectively and thematically, François Hartog, for example, with his indebtedness to the French tradition following from Foucault and Barthes, leads us to discover a kind of narrative symmetry of types that, despite being suggested by the point-form outline of Immerwahr, is only fully realized when the representation of Herodotus' others is taken as a thread and drawn through the whole *History*. Hartog's attention to simple oppositions and clever symmetries challenges the fact and importance of Herodotean objectivity. This approach unfortunately also denies the richness of the *History* as a performance writing-event. The corrective to this radical historicism as with Fehling's nihilism is in Thompson's preservation of the possibility of recovering appropriate lessons.[23]

Another strategy of Herodotus' students, complementary to the thematic approach, is a philological attention to recurring Herodotean concepts and terms. Attention to these paths of inquiry orients us towards a closer study of the text itself and towards an appreciation of the interrelation of seemingly disconnected stories. As we have discussed, Herodotus explicitly indicates his engagement with sources, particularly prevalent in Book 2, and draws his students

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23Carolyn Dewald and John Marincola, "A Selective Introduction to Herodotean Studies," *Arethusa* 20 (1987), 23, 25. François Hartog, *The Mirror of Herodotus: the representation of the other in the writing of history*, trans. J. Lloyd. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988).

into the action of the various participant-narrators; although special emphasis is reserved for particular sources (e.g. 2.55, 3.55, 4.76, 9.16), it is the overall project of engagement that drives the particular foreground story and sustains the investigative background.[24]

If the contemporary study of political philosophy is, as Danford suggests (and Nietzsche bemoans), epistemological, then our interest in Herodotus' account of investigative language would be more than justified.[25] Any study of the ancients, however, must attempt to address them on their own terms. A study of community-bound investigation also seems particularly apt in the context of Herodotus' sceptical view of understanding. In Herodotus' narrative, his epistemology emerges mainly as the questionability of knowledge, science, representation, and perception. By leading us to the intersections of the storykeeping and investigative enterprises with his sources, Herodotus explicitly draws our attention to the artifact, his fiction, and the complex various and shared act of its making. Any particular account is made more complex through his overt reliance on the reports of others. Thus, while acting as a collector, Herodotus warns his audience away from uncritical acceptance and dogmatism. To be an *histōr* is to be wary of over-simplification. We must consider Herodotus' presence alternatively as an investigator and as a storykeeper. The issue of Herodotus' narrative personae, touched on earlier, is especially in evidence as the *histōr* makes his way through accounts, sometimes as mere onlooker, at others an eye-witness, here a critic, and

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24John Marincola, "Herodotean Narrative and the Narrator's Presence," *Arethusa* 20 (1987), 121-122, 127.

25James Danford, *Wittgenstein and Political Philosophy*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 14, 199-200, Friedrich Nietzsche, "We Scholars," *Beyond Good and Evil*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Random House Vintage Books), 1989, s. 204.

of the (fourth-century Greek) future. This provocative prelude, however, seems to have been abandoned more than overcome.[28]

Herodotus' narrative persona as the *histōr* makes his way through accounts as an onlooker, an eye-witness, a critic and a writer.[29] The onlooker role is the most passive, Herodotus appears to have the least artistic control over his narrative. His report is simply given, and although he is present as a chronicler, he does not intrude. Herodotus' presence is neutral. In accounts of bodily equipment and technology, his skill in descriptive narrative, distinct from that in vivid dramatizing, puts us right in front of, rather than in the midst of that which he describes. Standing *in situ* with a certain observer's detachment, we easily imagine the tear-down Babylonians' skin-boats, clothing and body ritual. (1.195-196) Herodotus is a transparent medium through which the audience gets information, either about the Spartan escorts of Themistocles or the Phoenician introduction of the Greek alphabet. (8.124; 5.58) The narrator's effortless presence, however, does not necessarily make the passages simple.[30]

Herodotus' presence in the story of Mys consulting the oracles (8.133-135) shows a slightly different type of Herodotean neutrality; because of a lack of information our author declines judgement. "What he [Mardonius] wanted to learn from the oracles when he gave this instruction [to Mys, of Europus] I cannot say (we have no record of that)." Immediately following, however, Herodotus asserts his conjecture that Mardonius was consulting the Greek oracle for no other reason than to determine what he ought to do in his present situation

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28C.f. Stanley Rosen, *The Quarrel between Philosophy and Poetry* (New York: Routledge, 1988), 30-31; R. G. Collingwood, *The Idea of History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), 28-29

29Dewald, "Narrative Surface," 148.

30C.f. Grene, footnote #23 to 5.58, Hdt. *History*, 379.

regarding the Athenians. This reservation-of-comment passivity is only barely worthy of being called passive. With such interventions, Herodotus seems to be making a show of being a poor kibitzer. Even the instructive affinity that Grene notes between Herodotus' overall narrative presence and the actor-commentator in Tennesse Williams's *Glass Menagerie*, does not fully encompass the odd personality who is tirelessly dedicated to *kleos* in the report.[31]

The eye-witness investigator gets closer to the action, and supplements the onlooker's passivity with more rigorous heuristic principles. Herodotus' method of travelling and looking (*theōreō*), and his dedication to the pursuit are shown in the investigation of the Nile. (2.29) In the Egyptian logos, as we have discussed, Herodotus' investigative character is at its peak. He shows us the labours of looking-into things, and his necessary and troublesome recourse to hearsay accounts when his own eyes could not speak to us.

What follows shortly after Herodotus' admission to "investigating through hearsay" (2.29 *akouē ēdē historeōn*) is his "furthest inquiry" through hearsay. Alerted to be vigilant by Herodotus' recent reservations, it is in the story of the Nasamonian princes that we understand the degrees of separation under which he operates and under which we must also attend to his representation. (2.32) The limits of Herodotus' hearsay knowledge are linked to the lines of transmission of the account he presents. The description of the elaborate passing down of the story is followed by an account of the Nasamonian princes' own walkabout investigations. From the men of Cyrene – from the Ammonian king, from the Nasamonian envoys, from five of the "haughty and violent" sons of the Nasamonian chiefs (*paidas hubristas*), chosen by lots

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31Grene, Introduction to Herodotus *History*, 16. Grene imagines Herodotus as a kind of "theatrical impersonator." David Grene, "Herodotus: the Historian as Dramatist," *Journal of Philosophy*. 58.18 (1961), 478.

to tour the Libyan desert - Herodotus has his report of a land of wild beasts, followed by a true barren desert, then to a plain of fruit trees guarded by small men. These men escorted the Nasamonian princes across a marsh and to a city along a great river. Bearing in mind the distance of transmission that this story has travelled, it gives us pause when Herodotus suggests we use this as a touchstone for reasoning into the unknown from what is seen. This kind of inquiry is not without fruit, but neither is it without qualifications. (2.33) Writing is an artifact that restricts access more than speech, which in turn also limits access to phenomena that are more than mere speeches (e.g. deeds, monuments). The spectrum of openness runs from the polymorphous, yet-to-be meaningful phenomena to the speech and symbolism of free communities, to the tyrant's use of writing to keep secrets. (1.123)[32]

Herodotus initiates his re-reading of Homer's account of Troy with another indication of his investigator presence. By interviewing the Egyptian priests, Herodotus develops an alternative to Homer's version, that he then suggests Homer was aware of, but thought inappropriate for his epic poetry. It is here, according to Keith, that Herodotus gives a model for his own readers to follow. The careful reader of Herodotus will read him as he did Homer: by paying particular attention to non-thematic details. It is in such details that Herodotus discovered that Homer knew the tale of Helen that Herodotus hears from the Egyptian priests, and from this that Herodotus could understand Homer's decision to make selections suited to

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32Vivienne Gray, "Herodotus and Images of Tyranny," *American Journal of Philology*. 117.3 (1996), 379-380. Gray quotes Deborah Steiner: "To write is to enter the tyrant's sphere," 381.

his art.[33] Following such reading rules as Keith outlines ends in re-articulating the *History* from the perspective of particulars that in turn form a thematic treatment of non-thematic details. In offering this excellent example of Herodotus' interpretive investigation of Homer, Keith complements Dewald's attention to the investigator.

The thematic framework of the *histōr*, however, mitigates the exclusivity of Keith's emphasis on using the Homer reading, because it is a reading, as the only standard of the archetypal investigator. The tale from Homer that Herodotus uncovers is consistent with the tale the Egyptian priests tell. The oral and aural field of inquiry is richer, trickier and more encompassing than the optical and visual field that provides for literacy and linear order. From this view-point, the superiority of reading for reflection is a bias towards visual, literate perception.[34]

The model for understanding Herodotus' project is performance rather than reading. The design for oral presentation (*logos apodexis*), although it may be doubted that Herodotus did actually perform his *History*, shows the changeable and world-changing effects of utterance. Such re-performance allows the ordering attempts of the histōr to grasp the deeds and events: otherwise obscure in meaning and generally inaccessible. Narrative engagement with sources, which too often has led scholars to investigate the 'sources' themselves, shows

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33 Sidney Keith, "Herodotus: The First Political Scientist," (Ph.D. diss. University of Toronto, 1989), 33-34; Hdt. 2.113-118. C.f. Detlev Fehling, *Herodotus and His Sources; citation, narrative and invention*, trans. J. G. Howie (Liverpool: Francis Cairn, 1989), 54.

34C.f. supra, McLuhan, *Understanding Media*, 168. This may be a chicken-egg scenario: literacy privileges the visual field which allows for – and insists upon – literate ordering. McLuhan, from the *fiat* of Guttenberg, argues the former. The possibility or desirability of standard, mass produced terms, ideas and meanings is anachronistically foreign to Herodotus. More importantly, it runs contrary to his interviewer's sense of story telling and collecting. His *History* celebrates the 'problem' of diverse, incongruent stories.

not so much Herodotus' concern with the oral origins, as his creation of a narrative effect. Herodotus teaches the discourse of performance investigation.[35]

With his attention to Homer's details in the Egyptian context he calls on us to attend to the purpose of the tales for their audience: his, Homer's and that of the Egyptian priests. In the Egyptian case, the tale enables the priests to articulate their way of life within the Egyptian community, which is stratified into seven classes and seven craft-trades. (2.164) What interests us are the signs of the narrator and the signs of the stories as we try to articulate a relationship between wise voices, which speak in the text-space, and the text itself, which provides an opportunity for engagement with these voices to construct knowledge.

Herodotus, as a harried narrator, operates at the margins of his narrative mastery. He shows in his accounts with concise, concluding reports from the eye-witness (e.g. 2.47). Although not as cagey or circumspect as Herodotus' overt references to the needs of his account, his announcements act as an emphatic full-stop to a particular account and as a goad to our curiosity. ("That, then, is I what I have to say about the [Phoenician] mines.") Could he have said more? What could it have been? Why has he kept it from us? Is that actually the only end? Is Herodotus simply using an oral technique in written form to shape his performance, to show the showing? This invites our attempts to imagine interconnections among the multiple stories that are scattered through the whole *History*. The experience is at once exhilarating and frustrating - we are reminded of a "connect the aphorisms" strategy of engaging texts such as Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* or Nietzsche's *Beyond Good*

35R.V. Munson, "Herodotus' use of prospective sentences and the story of Rhampsinitus and the Thief in the Histories," *American Journal of Philology* 114.1 (1993), 27, 37; Donald Lateiner, "Non-verbal communication in the *History* of Herodotus," *Arethusa* 20 (1987), 105-107.

and Evil, and Nietzsche's defense of the aphorism as a hard nut to crack.[36]

The case of the Scythians' arrowhead bowl (4.81), develops more fully an example of how oddly unhelpful inspection can be. Herodotus looks into the obscure issue of the Scythian population, uncovers more evidence and yet finds no more precise knowledge. What we gain instead is an impressionistic sense of the Scyths' population from the details of the bowl's capacity, and a kind of artifact transformation that recalls Amasis' footbath. The type of suspiciousness Herodotus teaches through such stories guards against the danger of expecting too much of our science. With what we can know, we stand forth to face change itself; time fades colours and brings decay. Agency and determinism, in their manifold interrelations, inform Herodotus' dual sceptical and relativist attitude towards knowledge. Our ability to clarify the phenomena of our world is limited and contingent. With this teaching Herodotus urges us to be suspicious, cautious and ultimately moderate in our actions. What emerges, as Rosen notes, is the occasional discrepancy between this conservative teaching and Herodotus' openness to much that fellow Greeks and interview subjects would find troubling or repugnant.[37]

How then, from their perspective, can Herodotus' impiety seem benign? The storykeepers seem to assume that the interviewer 'believes them'; this means at least that the investigator believes that the subject is in earnest. The key relationship that seems to retain any

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36 Friedrich Nietzsche, "Mixed Opinions and Maxims," in *On the Genealogy of Morals*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Random House Vintage Books, 1967), s. 168. Ludwig Wittgestein, *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. G. E. M. Anscombe (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1967).

37Stanley Rosen, "Herodotus Reconsidered,"" *Herodotus: the histories: new translation, selection, backgrounds, commentaries*, trans. Walter Blanco, eds. W. Blanco and Jennifer Tolbert (New York: Norton, 1992), 342-342.

transparency throughout the *History* is Herodotus' relationship to his sources' integrity. 'They' seem beyond suspicion of outright deception. This leads some scholars to an exaggerated view of Herodotus' naivete and gullibility. There are, however, many cunning tricks and machinations reported in the *History*. (E.g. Greeks fooled by Pisistratus' men, 1.60; Darius wins Persian throne lottery, 3.82.) By using the strategies of interview and inspection the *histōr* testifies to the complexity and difficulty of translating experience into narrative. Yet, the artifact of Herodotus' *logos* remains; the *artifice* of his report is very important.[38]

It is not the sacred that is divorced from the profane in Herodotus, though he is willing to respect, if not believe, the distinction the Egyptians make to this effect. From the perspective of his (and our) understanding, all things in differing measure share in the inscrutability of that which is called divine. (2.3) This inaccessibility to understanding allows for the stories to remain unperturbed so that their connection to the way of life they articulate and encompass may be preserved. The investigator's basic assumption is that he has troubled accounts on his hands; the storykeeper expects his sources' best attempt at an enduring tale. Whether understood or not, certain things endure, others fade; that which preserves them is neither their wisdom, nor the wisdom of the reporter, but the poetic act of preservation through living and transmitting the tales.

We might hope that such ambivalence is resolved by Herodotus' penultimately intrusive attitude, that of the critic. Here the necessity of the account and Herodotus' artistic freedom seem to be working as one. He is marshalling the variants, drawing our attention to the fact

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38Grene, Introduction to Herodotus *History*, 24.

that he is doing so, and even congratulating himself on being a discriminating histōr in considering the ancestry of Greek kings. (6.52-53) The Spartans' dissenting opinion is given in the greatest detail, while the other Greek and the Persian versions get relatively short shrift. (6.53-54) Herodotus excuses this with another emphatic full stop ("That is enough about that"), and then by saying that others' declarations about the Egyptian heritage of Dorian kings is sufficient; he moves on to "things that others have not laid hold of." (6.55) Before returning to the story of Cleomenes, (6.61) we witness Spartan royal privileges, and similarities between the Spartans and the Persians, on the one hand, and the Egyptians, on the other. Herodotus, in keeping with the control he is exercising over his narrative here, ends his digression curtly: "So much for these matters."

Such shifts from one mode to another can be sudden, but seldom jar us. Other instances of his critical mode, however, bring us to one of Herodotus' most enigmatic and engaging narrative strategies. Herodotus preserves a received opinion that he disbelieves outright. The contrast to note is that between those who report what "they say," about divine visitation and the chastity of the priestesses, and the critic, who disbelieves the story of divine visitation. (1.182) On the one hand such intrusions appear to anticipate a correction by Herodotus, but more often our author makes his account more obscure by his seeming clarification. Dewald notes the destructive potential of this type of deconstructing science, divorced from the world in which the stories exist, are transmitted and operate.[39] Corollary to this kind of intrusion, Herodotus here gives three identical versions of visitation and chastity that are shared by the

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39Dewald, "Narrative Surface," 158-159.

Chaldaeans, the Egyptians of Thebes, and in Lycia. We might wonder if Herodotus disbelieves the Chaldeans, whether he also doubts the Egyptians and others? He atones for his scepticism in the one case by giving enduring power to the other peoples' views and relating it without comment.

The *logios-histōr* also recounts the sea-battle at Salamis, where, although Herodotus "cannot exactly say how each of the barbarians or Greeks fought," he retells in great detail the exploits of Artemisia. Herodotus' second intrusion into this tale is to express his uncertainty as to whether Artemisia rammed a compatriots' ship because of some previous quarrel with its captain, Damasithymus, or whether by chance his ship came to be in her escape route. As this tale progresses Herodotus as critic judges Artemisia favourably, noting her deed and the attendant good fortune. An enemy Attic ship left off pursuit, and, because Xerxes was mistakenly informed that she had sunk an enemy ship, he credited her with bravery greater than that of his men. We also see the inversion taking place as Xerxes' fortunes seem to be on the wane: "My men have become women, and my women men." To seal Artemisia's good fortune, no compatriot on the boat she rammed had any luck; none survived the attack to accuse her of treachery. (8.87-88)

The identification of the ships is particularly intricate, and ripe with questions of certainty and accuracy. Where Herodotus is openly uncertain of both the details of the general melee and Artemisia's motives, the Persian onlookers are alternately sure of that which is not, and sure of that which unequivocally is: Artemisia ship is identified by its ensign, but the friendly ship is assumed to be Greek. Herodotus' own uncertainty provides a foil to Xerxes' certainty. The distant observer of all this, King Xerxes, who watches the battle's progress

from a mountain top, exercises no judgement of the facts that he is given, and makes what appears to be an inaccurate judgement of his admiral's battle mettle.

Even in the critical mode, when Herodotus is giving his judgements of events, probabilities and outcomes, it is rare for him to declare himself in terms as unequivocal as he does when assessing the crucial importance of the Persian contingent of the Empire armies. (9.68) Herodotus uses emphatic statements of opinions elsewhere in the *History* where the mode is ambiguous; here, his particular usage of 'clarity' shows the narrative control that the critic is trying to exert (*dēloi te moi*). What comes to light in considering what Dewald calls the writer mode of the narrative persona, however, is that Herodotus' increasing involvement with the stories shows greater authority and sophistication in the integration of various types of material. From the onlooker position we have the view of the many; through the eye-witness we are privy to an emergent science, coupled with a "rhetoric of assurance" that is commensurate with the historian's proofs. The critic's attitude attempts a resolution of the onlooker and witness tension to offer value-judgements - some emphatic, some highly qualified, some belief, some disbelief - to allow for a synthesis of that which is said and heard and that which is seen. As discussed, however, even at the best of times the assurance of order that the narrative provides through inquiry and inspection is troubled. In this mode, Herodotus the narrator operates at the highest level of knowledge-seeking that we find within the pages of the *History*. It is the critical investigator who we follow in action, trying to invest the stories with some sensible meaning. With this increasing authority and sophistication, however, we fail to find a corresponding rise in authorial responsibility.

There is no obvious retreat from responsibility. This inverse proportion would show

that the more Herodotus appears, involving himself in making sense of his material, the less we are able to trust his judgement as authoritative. Thus is Herodotus' suspiciousness fully placed on the shoulders of his students. To rephrase Keith's hidden meaning dictum of Herodotean studies: "Herodotus is a liar who dares us to catch him." Add this to Keith's Herodotus, who "wants to be detected," and we find Herodotus more cavalier, perhaps more dangerous, in his willing abandonment to the appetite of the *logos*. In this light, Herodotus' first person statements about the inclusivity of his account are as descriptive as they are prescriptive. (We might imagine his proem: "I, Herodotus, would like my account to run as follows, we'll see what happens.")[40] The investigation Herodotus represents is, for better or worse, more unruly than that which Xerxes sees from the great heights where he oversees the battle of Salamis. (8.88, 90)

The criticism that Herodotus is too cavalier about accuracy to be seriously considered an historian, is relevant here. The artistic Herodotus, inviting interpretation, addresses if not answers such an objection from the material history perspective. Objectivity, like variant versions of stories, is a problem. Where the charge that he is cavalier arises again, however, and this may have part of the materialists' objection woven into it, is in Dewald's claim that he is irresponsible. We are put in mind perhaps of Nietzsche's characterization of his own writings as 'dynamite'.[41] Even among Herodotus' most enthusiastic interpreters, however, Herodotus' apparent lack of interest in truths proves more troubling than would be, for

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40Dewald, "Narrative Surface," 160-163; Keith, 36.

41Friedrich Nietzsche, "Why I am a destiny," s. 1, in *Ecce Homo*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Random House Vintage Books, 1967).

example, an apology for artistic unveiling - a lie that uncovers the truth. While Thompson pushes past Hartog's new historicism, she in turn must acknowledge the relativity of any interpretation of Herodotus' text. What returns again and again is the difficulty of a scholarly framework to live comfortably with the multiplicity of forces operating within the *History*, and Herodotus' exemplary enactment of the Greek tolerance for contingency.[42]

The last of Dewald's helpful *histōr* modes to consider is that of Herodotus as writer. Even more than the critic, this incarnation of the Herodotean narrator is master of the variants and their meaning. Dewald's concern is that though this acknowledged authority of authorities is actively exerting narrative control, he is not exercising the kind of responsibility for his material that an objective temperament would prefer. Despite her more overtly 'postmodern' attitude, Dewald leaves it open as to whether or not she is comfortable with Herodotus' eschewing of responsibility. Under the strain of composition, the *History* is a complex web of acknowledged, implied and inferred internal referencing. Herodotus admits that it has its own momentum. The main protagonist in the *History* is the *logos* itself, and Herodotus sets himself up as an antagonistic force, alternately trying to contain and direct its voracious inclusivity. The Heideggerian language about *logos* thus seems less strange: Herodotus' *logos apodexis* is the enacted performance of a "laying that gathers."

In an early example of the narrator as writer, Herodotus concludes Book One with his account of the death of Cyrus at the hands of the Massagetae, in the "most severe battle fought among the barbarians." (1.214) The critic presents himself, judging the severity of the battle,

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42Charles Meiner, "Origins of History in Ancient Greece," *Arethusa* 20 (1987), 56.

from missile-fire to a dead-locked melee from which neither side would back down. After the critic gives an account of the battle's severity, and shows it to be consistent with though limited by available information, Herodotus as the writer makes a definitive statement of inclusion with regards to the multiple stories about Cyrus' death. "There are many stories about the death of Cyrus, but this that I have told seems to me the most convincing." (1.214.5 [...], *hode moi ho pithanōtatos eirētai*) Making himself present with certain stock introductory and concluding phrases, Herodotus creates a pattern of what Munson calls the Herodotean metanarrative.

In his prospective and demonstrative usages, to anticipate a story or give it a summary conclusion, Herodotus is making his teaching presence most obvious.[43] Perhaps most memorable among the presentations of Herodotus as writer-chronicler, because of its apparent attention to details, is his calculation of the size of Xerxes' army. (7.184-185) Herodotus repeats his recording, calculation, addition amplifying the numbers as he emphasizes the process of reckoning. While Grene stresses the range of the problems with this description, and with Herodotus' reasoned guesses, he also emphasizes Herodotus' startling combination of extreme accuracy in the tabulation, and a lack of surprise at the preposterous final results: two-and-a-half million fighting men and almost three million support staff.[44]

Dewald's most telling example of Herodotus as writer, however, is from the story of Aristeas' account of the Hyperboreans. Herodotus is here again as a type of critic, exercising judgement, limited by what he can find out through interview and inspection. (C.f. 2.29) The

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43R. V. Munson, "Herodotus' use," 30. Vis hode, toioade, houtos.

44Grene, footnote #53, 55 to Hdt. 7.184, 7.185, *History*, 534-535.

context here is not that of the Egyptian priests' success or failure as logographers (2.28) to gain and preserve knowledge of the Nile's origins, but of that of a fellow investigator-poet, Aristeas.

Keith interprets the use of Aristeas' story as Herodotus' showing the importance of spiritedness in the *History*. Aristeas' poem connects the primitive rage of human beings with their longing for immortality within the framework of political community. Although recognizing the key importance of spiritedness' relationship to poetry and politics, Keith does not make the connection to Herodotus' own project here, as he does in his discussion of Herodotus' Homer in 2.113-118.[45] The accounts of Hesiod and Homer provide the 'first conclusion' to the story of the Hyperboreans (4.32), which is then supplemented by the final account, from the Delians. (4.33-36) It is Aristeas the poet who is simultaneously associated with the uttermost reaches of inquiry and knowledge and the poetic project of articulating this knowledge. More than Arion, Aristeas is an example of an Herodotean wandering poet historian.

We must address the negotiation of authorial control to which the audience is witness. Herodotus only rarely gives his sources individual names, and thus points to the influence of the *logioi* with whom he shares the stage. (2.55, 3.55, 4.76, 9.16) Despite their varying degrees of believability, Herodotus includes them, and addresses them, even if dismissively. The author as writer poses as a harassed editor in the service of, engaged with and attempting to control the text. The performance (*apodexis*) of these manoeuvres is Herodotus' success.

45Keith, 169-170. C.f. Keith, 33-34.

Neither cynical nor naive, Herodotus eschews responsibility for the use by others of the stories he preserves. (2.123) The *histōr*-storyteller is the only non-partisan among all the *logioi*. The image of investigation that Herodotus shows is modelled on those of his informants, and then improved upon. Although preserving a pose of orality in its re-presentation, the *History* is written. Thus the ephemerality of the oral - changeable, transmittable, and mutable - is preserved. This writing, hearing at least partially Socrates' objection to the poverty of writing in the *Phaedrus*, however, does not calcify the events deeds or phenomena, though the way in which they return to answer for themselves, remains largely beyond the artist's sphere of influence.[46]

46Plato *Phaedrus* 275-278; Dewald, "Narrative Surface," 166-169. With his stated ambition to provide a storehouse of treasures by saving accounts from ignomy Herodotus confronts the difficulties of serious and playful writing. He attempts to synthesize an oral-defense character, (commensurate with his serious pursuit) and the muteness of writing through the performance of an investigation. It could be that by rarely naming sources, Herodotus attempts to secure his singular position of narrative control. To avoid admission of their influence, however, Herodotus could have left them out altogether. Here nods to their extensive influence not merely out of courtesy, but also out of the 'necessity' of his logos to re-present the fullest range of the inquiry he performs.

Egyptian Piety and Memory

Look on me, all of you, and be pious.[1]

Each detailed national character also has its curious individuals, who characterize an ethos of inquiry in the History. For our purposes we will confine our consideration to the Egyptian, Persian and Scythian, as partially constitutive of the synthesizing Greek mode. In each case, there is a kind of 'outsiders' appeal that attaches to the investigators. The memorials of Egyptian kings Moersis and Amasis we have discussed briefly; Hephaestus' inscription quoted above speaks to us only in the presence of the interpreters, priests and our listening eyes. (C.f. 2.99) Our access to these testaments is made possible by the interpreters provided by king Psammetichus. The Persian royals, though perhaps a more curious crew, are more brutally represented in king Cambyses: exaggerated and yet true to his kin. Among the Scythians, where wise men are rare and most clearly at odds with their countrymen, we will consider Anacharsis' transgression, punishment and wisdom, while keeping in mind the extensive use of interpreters involved in the Scythians' trading affairs. Working through these seekers will point the way toward the archetypal Greek seeker in the *History*: the Athenian Solon, as many commentators note. The Solon we uncover, however, is now one of a cast of seekers, and shown forth to us mediated through the defeated Lydian Croesus, and ultimately through Cambyses' father, Cyrus, in the presence of his interpreters.

Recalling the adventuresome Nasamonians, then, we find throughout the *History* archetypal seekers in various national modes and regime positions. We make this survey of

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1Egyptian king "speaking through" an inscription in the temple of Hephaestus, Hdt. 2.141.

seekers through the participant-observation of Herodotus' narrator gathering the various aspects of the curious storyteller's craft from the sources he engages. Many if not most of these characters, as they appear, are fictitious or largely re-enacted. More than the simplistic identification of Herodotus with any particular wise person or seeker, we must confront a persona in evidence through many characters. Herodotus' narrator is part Cambyses, part Solon, part Psammetichus, part Anacharsis. He speaks through each to establish a composite image of a comprehensive inquiring perspective. It is not precisely cosmopolitan, in the sense of someone who, because at home everywhere is genuinely from nowhere in particular, but rather someone who has the capacity to be variously invested in different, even divergent horizons. The risk of losing one's compass and failing to retain any identity is most clearly shown by Cambyses and Anacharsis, and recalls Nietzsche's attention to the modern historical sense and the critical mode of historiography. The identification with a tradition pairs the Egyptian and Greek examples.[2]

That which Herodotus gleans from the Egyptians is the immense power and importance of memory. That theirs is the first major national *logos* Herodotus presents is indicative of how important memory is to Herodotus' whole enterprise. The historical record is an essentially active and practical, though metaphysical enterprise. John Ralston Saul attempts to articulate the concept of "applied memory" as the actualization of mythology.[3] In the natural

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2Friedrich Nietzsche, "On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life," in *Untimely Meditations*, trans. R. J. Holingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), [s. 7], 95-100.

3 John Ralston Saul, "Sensibility of an Idea," in *Reflections of a Siamese Twin: Canada at the end of the Twentieth Century* (Toronto: Penguin Canada, 1997), 499 C.f. pt. 4, "Applied Memory," and ch. 13, "Practical Metaphysics."

history of the Nile, its relationship to the Egyptian character and beliefs, and the preservation, articulation and interpretation of those beliefs, Herodotus finds the Egyptians eager to safeguard themselves against time. In Egypt Herodotus' stated mission against the failure of report (*akleos*) has its strongest and most overt parallel.

The Greek affinity with Egypt (q.v. Amasis' great love of the Greeks, 2.178), is made possible to a large extent by the innovations of king Psammetichus. While attending to individual seekers, we must keep the national character in mind, and the degree to which such an individual represents, rejects or reforms the *ēthos* and *nomos* of his own way of life. In case of the Egyptians, their dedication to records is an important guide. The Heliopolitans set this tone, for they are "said to be the greatest chroniclers (*logiōtatoi*) in Egypt," and the Egyptian farmers prove to be "great in cultivating the memory of mankind (*mēmnēn anthrōpōn*) and are far the greatest record-keepers (*malista logiōtatoi*) of any people with whom I have been in contact." (2.3: 2.77) The clerk (*ho grammatistēs*: recorder, writer-down) of Athena's relics in Sais (Egypt) is the only person to claim knowledge of the Nile's origins, despite the general admission of ignorance. (2.28; 2.19) We can see the influence of the Egyptian record-attitude as Herodotus adopts its use in a case where the Greeks tell three stories, "not worth mention, save as a record." (2.20) The vast apparatus of translation and the interrelation of language and way of life in Egypt serves as a model of inquiry for Herodotus' own Egyptian inquiries.[4]

From the first experiments of Psammetichus (2.2) to the pyramid engravings read by

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4As might be expected, Herodotus offers the most direct linguistic translations in the Egyptian logos, though the incidence in the Scythian logos is also high. In the Egyptian section Herodotus also stresses his investigation more than anywhere else in the History, historiē: 2.118.1, 2.119.3, 2.99.1 (c.f. Proem, 1.1.1, and 7.96.1 – the one place Herodotus announces his "investigative account," historiēs logon, to exclude the Spartan leaders' names).

the interpreter (2.125), the Egyptian seekers expect a world in which there are definite, knowable things, that may be discovered by human beings. The clarity of the results of Psammetichus' investigation into the original language may seem ridiculous at first; in the context of understanding that interpretation as translation is essential to what human can know, however, it is an important inquiry to make. Ostensibly, he tries to discover the human language prior to that which is taught. To call this the natural or divine language seems to over-read the passage, and gives Psammetichus no credit as an investigator.[5] Psammetichus' notion is that the non-taught language spoken by human infants would indicate the oldest human tongue. It is the Egyptians who found their profound piety on their connection to an ancient tradition. To gloss over the antiquarian and monumental historical consciousness present in the Egyptians themselves is to overlook the clue to Herodotus' own historical sense as it emerges in his investigation of all things Egyptian.

Psammetichus' investigation of language is predicated on a wish to know who were the oldest people. We see that his methods, if suspect, are secondary to his purpose. His inquiries are frustrated, and so he devises his experiment of having children raised in captivity by nannies commanded to silence. Herodotus stresses the foolishness of the Greek corruption of the story (that women's tongues were cut out) and draws our attention to the complex linguistic problem at hand. By this story the Greeks nudge Psammetichus' character toward that of the more violent rulers in the *History*, most notably the Persian king Cambyses. That the Egyptian and Persian seekers are intimately connected is shown by comparing their models of ruler-

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5Seth Benardete, *Herodotean Inquiries* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1970), 34.

seekers, and suggested by the first mention Herodotus makes of the Egyptian priests. (1.140) In comparing both the Persian and Egyptian holy-men to the Median Magi tribe, magicians and dream interpreters, Herodotus establishes the complex translation enterprise to be undertaken by Egyptian and Persian royals alike, but in different forms.

Thus Psammetichus anticipates the ruler-seeker mode that characterizes the Egyptian inquiries. He stands in a troubled relationship to the accepted wisdom of the Egyptians - not initially against it, however. Prior to his experiment he too believed (*enomizon*) with them that the Egyptians were the first humans of all to come into being. Although Psammetichus' piety leads him to bear Egyptian custom no ill will, his wish to know truly succeeds his belief. Importantly, Herodotus has underscored his wish to know with one precondition, and thus qualified the outcome of his investigation. It is not plain whether Psammetichus develops his curiosity on becoming king, or if a longstanding puzzle becomes soluble with his royal influence. After inquiry fails to answer his question, he devises a plan.

He carefully orchestrates an experiment in which two children of common people are given to a shepherd to be raised among the flocks. This he did because of his wish to hear the first words the children would speak. Subsequently, their first utterance beyond "meaningless noises," seemed to the shepherd, because of the children repeating it, to be worth bringing to the king's attention. Because of the shepherd's patience, this initial "calling out" took shape as a word, which was found to be the Phrygian for 'bread'. It may be hard to imagine that the shepherd would not have heard in the children's cries the imitation of his flocks unless we keep investigative Psammetichus' command in mind. It is the great antiquity of the Egyptians that moves them to wish to know where they stand in relation to the first people. They are not

a people of the "day before yesterday." They acknowledge their own historicity contingent on and antique to the Nile's natural bounty which they inhabit. Intuition of history moves the Egyptians' to have need of Psammetichus' language experiment. (2.15)

If Herodotus' representation of language and interpretation is so important to his *logos*, then why are his translators largely invisible? When the linguistic scope of the accounts Herodotus sifts through is borne in mind, interpreters are mentioned relatively rarely. Even if we accept a detailed merchant-Herodotus hypothesis, Herodotus the polyglot trader still needs a great deal of translation – most easily provided by Greek-speaking locals from their own experience, oral tradition and documents. Why does Herodotus neglect to credit his translators as part of his attention to his sources, at least generally for each logos?

Because of it's elegant simplicity as an explanation, we must first consider that Herodotus merely took his translators for granted. In keeping with much subsequent ethnography, Herodotus' critical judgment was exercised over material received through interpreters. By engaging Herodotus in English, we too participate in this model of investigation. Exercising his judgment, Herodotus thus demonstrates his concern with scientific rigour, and his interest in accurate accounts of phenomena, despite whatever errors may accrue in the transmission of such accounts, or whatever tales may be put over on the reporter.

This second-hand approach has left Herodotus open to charges of naivete. Such gullible reportage, with which Herodotus is often charged, sometimes excused, but never fully acquitted, is compared to modern ethnographic and historical methodology. Having begun with translated accounts, the investigator works toward an understanding of the local language or languages sufficient to conduct further investigation, and to verify the second-hand material.

Thus, it is supposed, transmission errors and deceptions are effectively reduced or removed, leaving the *histōr* in more direct contact with the materials, stories and events that are the objects of his investigation. If we accept, provisionally, that Herodotus is naive, and contrast him with the sophisticated translator-reporter, we discover that they share a suspect presupposition: transmission is largely irrelevant. The one ignores the issue, the other supposes it can be overcome. In the case of Herodotus' naivete, translation is taken for granted as acceptable access to the accounts of others; in the sophisticated case, in which secondary translation is so methodologically suspect as to warrant outright dismissal, primary linguistic access by the investigator is deemed to erase the problem of narrative transmission.

Herodotus certainly does not achieve the latter. In demonstrating the workings of his own account and in the stories he relates, Herodotus reminds us repeatedly that such perspicuity is at best an illusion of human making, or evidence of a lapse in human understanding. Psammetichus, the Persian royals and anyone relying on accounts are in a tricky position. This trouble begins in an illusion born of underestimating the inherent oracularity of phenomena.[6] Because it indicates rather than explains, information needs interpretation. Like some Herodotean seekers, when faced with the troublesome complexity and equivocation of phenomena we suppose the possibility of simple clarity. The use and abuse of historical events is particularly good evidence of this activity. The illusion of an absent investigator, whose identity and ancillary roles are thought removed from the investigative equation, fosters a dangerous climate of attending to history's 'obvious' lessons without self-

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6C.f. Vivienne Gray, "Herodotus and Images of Tyranny," *American Journal of Philology* 117:3 (1996), 363. C.f. Anna Missioli, "Dreams and the Orient," *Ariadne* 6 (1993), 89-107.

scrutiny.[7] Alternatively, Herodotus challenges us with a performative project that is profoundly contingent, provisional and verging on the impossible. For Herodotus, the archetypal epistemological struggle is to understand the essentially mysterious. This problem, he discovers, is perhaps best encompassed by humans' attempts to acknowledge the divine, about which "all human beings know equally." (2.3)

For Herodotus to be classed as entirely naive, his ignorance of interpreters would have to be complete, and particularly so regarding his own inquiries, perhaps moreso than in relation to describing stories and in reporting events. As might be suspected, the father of history and lies does not ignore what we have called the problem of transmission, but presents the speeches and deeds of translation in key contexts, pointing to the essential contribution to understanding in the working metaphor of interpretation.

Herodotus' image of Egyptian investigation is completed by adding the seeker personae of the priests and interpreters to Psammetichus' linguistic experiment. The preservation trades allow the Egyptians to enjoy a nascent historical sense. Although the priests and interpreters constitute two distinct classes of trade, they both assist Herodotus' access to his objects of study. Unlike the Persian case we will consider, where the monarch is a solo seeker, Psammetichus' Egyptian experimentation is complemented by the interpreter-priest tradition. The apparent collapse of political authority and curiosity outside of custom in the ruler-seeker

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7Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), 3, 10, 410-12, 424. Ken Booth, "Security and Self," in *Critical Security Studies*, ed. Keith Krause and Michael Williams (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 83-119. Jervis' work, though over-reliant on the vocabulary of behavioural psychology, stresses the dire possibilities of such ignorance in the Cold-War schema of threats and conflict. Ken Booth focusses on the problem of history's lessons by attending to the broad interpretive paradigms taught in academic thought-schools and in national and pan-national regimes.

does not reach its fullest expression in Egypt; limits are provided by historical awareness and the inviolability of the divine things.

The collapse of political authority and self-love characterizes the reign of Cheops and his brother Chephren, following on years of good laws and great prosperity in Egypt. In discovering the story of this extremely miserable period, Herodotus makes use, and overt mention of the Egyptian interpreters, who "reading the writing, said that sixteen thousand talents had been spent [on the pyramid's construction]." (2.125) We have noted Herodotus' persistent interest in architectural marvels above, and here we have him amazed by the resources involved in the construction of roads and pyramids. Here, the interpreters' reading and the priests stories, depending on Herodotus' own good memory (*eu memnēsthai*) are all acknowledged as forming part of the alternative history of the "one hundred and six years in which every evil fell upon the Egyptians." (2.128) The names, recorded and preserved by the Egyptian chroniclers, are not mentioned by the Egyptians out of hatred. Here again we find the seeker-chronicler disposition running against the grain of customary belief. Without a synthesizing *logos* to preserve the preferred and unpopular accounts, only part of the story would survive.

Although Herodotus acknowledges lines of account transmission elsewhere in his *History*, this chapter (2.154) includes a rare presentation of the direct, active role interpreters play in the access to the experiences of others. It was king Psammetichus who instituted the education of Egyptian boys in the Greek language by Ionians and Carians to be translators. The unique use of "people of foreign speech" (*alloglōssoi*) is particularly provocative here; Herodotus' use of *barbaroi* to indicate non-Greek speech is here turned on its head, where the

Greek-speakers are foreigners. (C.f. 8.135) While emphasizing the linguistic otherness of the Ionians and Carians, Herodotus stresses that they are favoured with land by king Psammetichus. They made their lives as settlers in Egypt, flanking the Nile on either side, and became tutors to Egyptian (we assume royal) children. The interpreters' multiple identities contextualize their presence in Egypt, allowing them to live, thrive and benefit from their status as landed foreigners, who promote their own language in service to the Egyptian nation. Also as a result Herodotus, his peers and his audience enjoy precise information about Egypt.

This exactitude is conspicuous in at least three ways. Firstly, Herodotus' correction of received Greek opinion about Egypt is generally harsh. Error predominates in Greek stories of Egypt's customs and nature. (2.45) Distinct from the knowledge of the Greeks, Herodotus' own knowledge comes from access to the Greek-speaking Egyptian interpreters, affording him a position from which he may critique Greek accounts of Heracles in Egypt, for example, thus challenging Greek accounts of their own hero. In apparent acknowledgement of this, Herodotus truncates his remarks on the subject, and entreats the gods for favour despite his report. This seeming equivocation may illuminate Herodotus' careful measurement of his comments about matters divine. The benefits of exact knowledge from investigation remain in question if the reporter must be so chary with the fruits of his discoveries. Herodotus is again making more a production of hiding the questionability of the origins of the divine, than actually keeping information hidden that his audience might piece together. Thirdly, the connection between Herodotus' "such exact knowledge" of events in Egypt and the Egyptians' discovery of "more monstrous happenings than any other people in the world," points to Herodotus' attraction to great deeds and superlative wonders, and suggests a gratitude to the

interpreters descended from the Greeks' first Egyptian students. This, Herodotus' fullest explicit presentation of his interpreters' role in Egyptian mnemonic inquiry, informs our view of the use that characters in the *History* also make of translators: for purposes other than applied memory.

Persia: Transformation as Preservation

> For it is surely not in the nature of man [*anthrōpēiē phusi*] to be able to turn aside that which is fated to be.[8]

Transformation for preservation is, on the one hand, essential to the character of tyrants and their tyrannies, and essential, on the other, to the potential of open and free communities for their preservation. A troubled line is thus drawn between a metaphor of cancerous growth and one of accretion.

The distinction between freedom and tyranny is not straightforward in the *History*. Sustainable political community depends on balancing two pairs in tension: our desire for freedom and that of (tyrannical) others to rule us, and our desire for freedom and our own penchant to rule others. Persian kings are especially oblivious to the possibility of contented self-rule. The potential for transformation lies at the heart of communities' survival. It is linked inextricably to the possibility, for Herodotus, of these communities – and their distinctive, even antithetical individuals – to remain open and free rather than closed and

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8Cambyses' death-bed oration to the Persian notables, Hdt. 3.65.

authoritarian. The axiomatic equations, such as Cambyses' statement above, that tend to be presented with little qualification as Herodotus' own view are invariably inadequate: because the key is mutability. It is not in the nature of man-as-Cambyses to turn aside that which is fated to be.

By engaging Herodotus' *logos*, we try to understand the relationship between political and paradigmatic authority, and the appropriate corrective in a community characterized by free and equal speech. Initially, the solution presents itself as a profound and practical understanding of the human situation; a solution by which seeing (*theōreō*) emerges through re-presentation (*apodexis*) and setting forth embraces investigation. Fearless political and investigative speech is the human artifact that represents the changeable nature of things. It also addresses the human wish for some lasting deed to stand forth in the face of such change, thus preserving, saving, hoping against hope that some evidence of us will remain. The spoken word and the world thus respoken are, so to speak, new. This openness embraces certain core needs – the most central being preservation. Fearlessness, however, also characterizes the tyrant's ego. The forms of preservation range from human sexual regeneration, (2.30) to the 'supranatural' and technical (e.g. Lake Moeris, 2.149), to the poetic artifact of story-telling, preservation and re-enactment. This last, potentially world-remaking, participates in the mastering mode of imperialism.

Herodotus focusses attention on this actively transforming character of tyrannical conquest in many stories. Some are signalled by a relatively rare Herodotean Greek usage. In the final, successful stages of the Persians' Ionian campaign, the long resistance and revolt (6.1-32) set the stage for the transformation the Persians intend to inflict on the Greeks. When

the Persian generals "gained control of the cities, they chose the best-looking boys and castrated them, making them eunuchs instead of men, and they sent the best-looking girls to the King." (6.32) The girls are *kallistai* "most beautiful," the boys are *eueidestatous* "most well-formed." To emphasize the deformation, Herodotus gives us "instead of men" as *anti einai enorchias* making them "other than to be testicled."

What strikes us immediately is the overt sexuality of the enslavement transformations. Keith is particularly unflinching as to the importance of human sexuality in Herodotus. By relating it to spiritedness, he places it too near the core of his interpretation, perhaps, but this nonetheless serves as a helpful corrective to the oddly squeamish Herodotus that we have, for example, from Grene.[9] The active project of memory to which Herodotus dedicates his genius and energy suggests that the ephemeral-lasting axis of human generation in the face of failed report (*akleos*) is an important model for Herodotus' enterprise.[10]

On the one hand, the noble girls, daughters of the Ionian princes (6.9), are made available for the King, presumably as concubines. Thus abasing them, Darius' generals show the preferred insult of Persian kings, child abuse, and replay Cambyses' abuse of the Egyptian nobles' children (3.14). More plainly, by making good on the promise of castration, the

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9Sidney Keith "Herodotus: The First Political Scientist" (Ph.D. diss. University of Toronto, 1989), 191-92; Grene, endnote to Hdt. 2.47, *History*, 667-668.

10The Arabic, el de keur, "the virile member" demonstrates the association perhaps more explicitly than the English 'remember.'

Dekeur "signifies the male of all creatures, and is also used in the sense of 'mention' and 'memory'." Of a man who for reason of injury or infirmity can "no longer fulfil his conjugal duties," they say: "'the member of such an one is dead'; which means: the remembrance of him will be lost, and his generation cut off by the root. When he dies they will say, 'His member has been cut off,' meaning, 'His memory has departed from the world.'" Shaykh Nefwazi, "The Perfumed Garden," annot. and trans. R. F. Burton, in *Literary Companion to Sex*, ed. Fiona Pitt-Kethley (New York: Random House, 1992), 79-80.

generals at once remove the generative possibility of the Ionian aristocrats, and allow for further aggrandizement of the Persian stock. By recalling the Egyptian logos by this association, Herodotus also puts the deeds of the deserter Egyptians in our minds (2.30). When they were confronted by the Egyptian king Psammetichus, and "entreated mightily" not to abandon their gods, their wives and children, one retorts that to have wives and children all that he needs is his penis. Under the influence of these plain-speaking Egyptian traitors, the Ethiopians "became more civilized, through learning the manners (*ēthea*) of the Egyptians." (2.30)

Herodotus' repeated use of 'instead of' (*anti*) in such stories suggests a thematic sense of transformation; the Lydians divide and become two distinct peoples (1.94), slaves become (instead) free and ruled become rulers (1.210), islanders become mainlanders (7.170). These stories tell either of a change in the architecture of authority, or, as is suggested by the civilizing change in the Ethiopians just mentioned, in the constitution of a community's character. These stories' family resemblance to each other, and the durability that follows from this kinship, is as important for Herodotus as their lessons.

In a speech by Hystapses to Cyrus about his having freed the Persians from the Medes by revolt transformation is also signalled by *anti* (1.210). No particular community has a monopoly on deeds worthy of report, either famous or infamous. Just as Persia revolted from its masters, so will nations resist Persia's imperialism. Such imperialism is cast here in the either-or dichotomy of ruling or being ruled. This is precisely the over-simplification in the Persian mindset that we have seen in the story of the Median Deioces (1.96). As mentioned, despite "having fallen in love with royal power," (*erastheis turannidos*) his desire for

aggrandizement was limited. If other Median kings were similarly temperate, perhaps the Persians would have been less moved to revolt. Where the Egyptians tie their desires back to their own tradition, the Persians' love looks outward with appetite but without discrimination. The defeated Median King Astyages uses similar language when the Persians vanquish him, and he bemoans that the Persians, once properly slaves, are now masters, and vice versa. (1.129) Thus a victorious revolt turns the status quo on its head, making the proper political relations seem to depend only on who wins the war.

Tyranny broadly understood in the *History* is developed through the Persian mastering science of politics: it means transformation. As Cambyses finally discovers, recovering his senses and proving wise, there is an immanent tyranny in the nature of things to grow and decay. (3.65) To live without acknowledgement and even fear of such movements is the life of an egoist. We might prefer to say it is necessity not tyranny that characterizes *phusis* as such patterned change. In Herodotus' case, he at once aligns the necessity of his *logos* with the pattern of rise and fall of individuals, peoples and cities, and opposes their utter obliteration. Exigencies that overwhelm the designs of the effected individuals or communities are both transformative and tyrannical. Is there an element of the tyrannical in any mastery, any change from one state of being or knowledge to another? Cambyses makes his most urgent command in order to stave off the perishability of his rule, accepting the impermanence of his own flesh, but not the impotence of his nature. To the poetic preserver such change presents itself as tyrannical because it is relatively unyielding, not entirely inevitable, and to be thwarted with every energy and talent.

The *History* explores the problem of preservation and transformation as one of its main

interests, by juxtaposing the Egyptian and Persian ethos. Although we find Herodotus and his characters wading through a complex, messy reality that often foils effective navigation, the potential of thoughtful transformation lies always before us, the audience. Transformation here must be understood in both its active and passive senses. We transform and are transformed. If fate is mindless, we may be mindful. Day and night, the heat and cold of the seasons, decay and ultimately death: changes goad the human spirit to rise in angry desperation, to assert itself in understanding, and resisting or attempting transformations with speeches and deeds.

Cambyses' logos is contextualized by Darius' use of interpreters to conduct his cultural investigation. Having given limited attention to the most famous Herodotean vignette we must nonetheless consider this chapter as part of the Cambyses' logos. The interpreters' apparently parenthetical presence allows Herodotus to draw an emphatic proof from Darius' concise account of foreign burial rites. Careful examination leads humans to prefer their own ways as the best ways. (3.38) What Darius' inquiry is and is not follows from Cambyses' Frankensteinian forays into inquiry. Although Darius' examination occurs as a foil, it also furthers Cambyses' mad science.

The interpreters' mediation of the whole proceeding is ostensibly for the Greeks' benefit. With this emphasis, Herodotus pointedly emphasizes that the lessons about tyrannical investigation are of particular interest to the Greeks. Precisely because they have a more measured appreciation of their own rites, as compared to the shuddering reaction of the Callatians, the Greeks are at risk of failing to take the dangers of the Persians' paradigmatic imperialism to heart.

The radical example of Persian investigation is Herodotus' Cambyses, and his brutal

experiments. (3.31-37) These experiments are not meant to increase his wisdom, but to confirm the fact of his own power in the expanding Persian empire. The central Egyptian notion of preservation through shared memory is here perverted into preservation through infamy.

Distinctions are blurred and limits are over-stepped by merging looking and doing in the paradigm of the experiment. Where Psammetichus' inquiry enterprise awaited the phenomena to unfold, Cambyses is an image of the tyrant as an Herodotean investigator; his tyrannical character is, however, simply an exaggeration of the Persian ethos, and Herodotus' image of rationalism. With the boundaries of his modestly growing empire, Cambyses as *histōr* is not antithetical to the regime, but the distillate of its essential character.[11]

The locus of his friction with limits and distinctions is Cambyses' untutored inquisitive nature: his "youth and humour." (3.36) Herodotus' narrative persona intervenes at the climax of Cambyses outrages and uses Darius' more moderate cultural experiment as a foil and full-stop to the litany of Cambyses' crimes. Thus pitting one Persian experimenter against another in the sphere of emperical nomizotics, Herodotus also reintroduces the interpreters to further qualify matters. (3.38) Their presence in Darius' culturally relativist experiment, stresses the absence of the ancestral concerns of the Egyptians. Where the Egyptians are the greatest storykeepers, the Persians place a premium on so-called truth-telling, in a way particularly and violently hostile to the horizons of tradition. (1.136-138)

Herodotus' inquiring character as a scientific attempter, also shares in Cambyses' youth

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11Keith, 128; Norma Thompson, *Herodotus and the Origins of Political Community* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 43; Rosaria Vignolo Munson, "The Madness of Cambyses," *Arethusa* 24 (1991), 59.

and humour, and raises questions about Herodotus' inquisitive relationship to any political community. A limited consensus in scholarship advises that Herodotus' readers ought to consider the politics of his investigation, his looking at that which is "not his own" (customs, laws), as being at odds with estabished orthodoxies. This tension is originally found in the Gyges' story (1.8-12).

The story of Gyges' regicide under compulsion, which follows the impropriety of seeing the queen naked, shows royal power alternately upholding and overturning customary law. It seems that pivotal figures in Book one share the Queen's characteristic of self-mastery. (C.f. Croesus, 1.86; Harpagus, 1.119.) By following Herodotus' narrative inquiry, the reader is drawn into this tension between a life bounded by political community and one boundlessly inquisitive. In illustrative contrast to both Gyges' unlawful looking and the Egyptians' mnemonics, the Persian king disregards distinctions and oversteps customary limits; the "fine things discovered by men of old," without provocation and with spirited energy. (1.8)

Empire-building initiates Cambyses inquiries and the Persian discovery of the peoples described in the History. Diametrically opposed to any ability or inclination to save the phenomena of difference, the non-Persians are understood simplistically. Presented in the context of imperialism, the king's investigations suggest the connection between the transforming effects of experiment and the conquest character of empire.[12]

12Tom Darby, "Civilization and Empire at the End of the Age of Abstraction," *The Literary Review of Canada* 6:9 (1997), 8. Darby recalls the etymological affinity between empire and empirical through *emperikos*, linking expansion and transformation to the concreteness of experience. Empire and empirical science mean to transform exprience without saving the phenomenon they seek to transform. Herodotus seeks to expand on the materialistic and rational to include the phenomenal and irrational (passionate). He too is transfiguring experience, and recognizes the dangers in transformation bereft of practical, traditional wisdom. To lead his students away from inqusitive tyranny and arrogant empire-seeking, Herodotus attempts to offer an understanding that might tempt us to ground our political science in his nomizotics supplemented by a psychology of cultural and individual identity.

Cambyses' three key outrages are experiments of a sort. He tests the bounds of the soul, of the law, and of the gods: of Psammenitus the Egyptian king, of Persian law as interpreted by the royal judges, and of Apis the Egyptian calf-god incarnate. In each case he discovers the limit of each object of investigation, but this definition is always in the terms of Persian power and paradigm. Psammenitus' fortitude of spirit is tried to its breaking point. Equated with Cambyses' will, Persian law is re-written. Apis is doubted, denounced, and finally killed, proving the limit of its animal-physical divinity.

Collapsed into power politics investigation becomes as truncated as the ensuing rule is arbitrary. Cambyses' experimental scientism is commensurate with his self-love and autocratic power. The *eros*-driven excesses of spiritedness that move the tyrant as *histōr* overcome not only particular, parochial limits and distinctions, but the notion of limits themselves, whether from law, history or nature. The only standard is mastery through brutal inquiry.[13]

Like his investigation of Psammenitus' character and the Persian law, Cambyses' final evaluation of Egyptian piety is that the whole tradition is a lie, not that the celebrants and

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In this, Rousseau has Herodotus' Cambyses in mind: "What experiments would be necessary to achieve knowledge of natural man? And what are the means for making these experiments in the midst of society?" His answer: a coincidence, "hardly reasonable to expect," of the consumate sophist and the draconian statesman. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Preface to the Second Discourse, *First and Second Discourses*, trans. Rodger D. and Judith R. Masters (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1964), 93. C.f. Endnote (a) to "To the Republic of Geneva," 182.

13C.f. Arlene Saxonhouse, "The Tyranny of Reason in the World of the Polis," *American Political Science Review* 82:4 (December 1988), 1261-2, 1267. Saxonhouse's reading of Sophocles' *Oedipus Tyrannicus* presents an alternative view of the tyrant commensurate with the theorizing, abstract-rational individual. Saxonhouse's Oedipus transcends through generalizing, synthetic reason and questions the link between the nature of knowledge and the meaning of rule, and the necessary limits provided by personal history or nature.

The lesson she draws from Sophocles is that limits are, and tragedy awaits those who fail to understand this. Although Herodotus' presentation seems to follow the pattern of outrages, recognition, and fated death, Cambyses' story is more troubled. At least, the king's tragic awareness is that he failed to be an effective histōr, in order to be a more successful tyrant. The zenith of an inquiring ruler in Herodotus is far from the Platonic philosopher king, and appears closer to an armed prophet. If Persia enjoyed a fuller religious tradition with a commensurate interest in the soul, Cambyses might have fared differently.

priests were deceiving him about it. After hearing the beliefs about Apis the calf-god's very rare appearance, he punished the reporters with death. (3.27-29) He sent for the priests to have their learned version, on the pretext that such a momentous occasion would never occur without his prior knowledge: an incarnate god among the Egyptians. (Cambyses seems to suppose that a divine visitation ought to need his approval.) The core of Persian truth-telling provides an ethos consistent with his conquest-inquiry. This character grows out of the Persian wish for consistency and control of reality.[14] For Cambyses, the divinity of the Egyptian god ought to preclude his dagger's effect. Thus he scoffs at Apis' "susceptibility of iron." At once he demolishes the truth-claims of the Egyptian tradition and the very possibility of such religious horizons. This experiment verifies his bias against the divinity of Apis, and proves his own standards of divinity. The radicalized Persian divine is an abstract principle, not a life-nurturing faith. (1.131)[15]

Cambyses dies (3.66) bemoaning his inability to correctly understand the vision of his usurpation, and lamenting his failure to gauge the equivocal meaning of his dream. He failed to grasp even the basics of Egyptian religion: that the gods support life by connecting the people to a tradition. The Egyptian mnemonic ethos gives voice to their deep tradition, the Persian is only interested in the surface appearances. The paucity of the Persian conceptions of the gods, writing large their ideas of human character in the world, limits that which

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14Thompson, 82-3; Keith, 135,

15Thompson, 90-1; Keith, 136, 138. Proof tends to incorporate both demonstration and test, the former being a definition from power, the later from knowledge. Persian material culture (objects of pleasure, of war-making, of meaning) would provide an interesting starting point from which to consider the implications of their technology of empire combined with the empirical ethos. If Herodotus doubts the truth of the Egyptian claims, he acknowledges the influence and importance of the Egyptians' holding them dear.

Cambyses can know: he is fundamentally ignorant of any spirit other than his will.[16]

In the well-worn custom is king passage, Herodotus states that "after examination" each person would chose his or her own customs as the best; this in the immediate context of Cambyses' outrageous examinations. Cambyses' examination overturned his own and others' customs due to the arrogant character of the inquiry. With Herodotus' presence intruding into the narrative here, after being relatively absent through the Cambyses' story, the author's own investigation presents itself for tacit comparison.

Cambyses' investigative curiosity does not spring from wonder, but from a superficial voyeurism: mere looking, rather than genuine seeing. The shared quality of the investigator's and tyrant's curiosity is qualified by its manner of exercise and its aim; the one critical and nuanced, the other brutal and unrelenting, but both, and this is perhaps the most troubling aspect of their kinship, looking toward transformation as their clarion call.

Herodotus does favour seekers in the *History*.[17] This insight provides the thread through our investigation. What are the relationships between seekers and their communities? In the beginning and the end, we ask if inquiry is possible, by asking how it is possible. Herodotus shows it to us in many guises and modes. Cambyses the *histōr* is a seeker-in-deed, if not a seeker indeed. Instead of considering distinctions and limits in performative speech, he willfully ignores or sweeps them aside. Herodotus' collapse of the *histōr* and the tyrant parallels the synthesis of the two, and presents precisely the object against which to defend ancient social science. Maintaining as necessary the divide between inquiry and politics,

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16C.f Keith, 27-35 passim, 36.

17Thompson, "Introduction," *Origins*, x.

preserves a kind of politics that allows for an essential distinction between a king and a tyrant. The collapse of the quests for knowledge and power depends on the superficiality and affirmative quality of the knowledge sought, which in turn allows for its submission to the whims of power politics. Cambyses does want to be recognized for what he is, which is constituted by what he does as the autocratic, imperialistic Persian king. This is his identity.[18]

Cambyses' final awareness recognizes only his misunderstanding of his dream, and absolves him of guilt in ordering his brother's death. The understanding here is not of the ostensible moral problem. That which he supposed was perspicuous knowledge was nuanced, in need of more subtle consideration and interpretation. The distinction is made between Cambyses' notion of being right (correct about his own mental state and abilities), and any actual wisdom that he might learn from the words of his advisor Croesus. Such a distinction centres on Cambyses' combined ignorance and arrogance: he ignores any wisdom that might originate outside himself. Cambyses' mistaken interpretation of his dream of Smerdis' usurpation also leads to a recognition of that mistake. The murder is thus merely wrong in

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18C.f. Alexander Kojève, "Tyranny and Wisdom," Leo Strauss, "Restatement," and "Two ways," in *On Tyranny*, ed. Victor Gourevitch and Michael S. Roth (New York: The Free Press, 1991), 173, 177, 91. Although Cambyses fits the classical list of tyrannical features (q.v. 3.80), his story suggests a more Kojèvean than Straussian problematique of wisdom and power. The despot that Otanes describes is Cambyses, but is not the only possible type. Would a Cambyses who is not "outside the thoughts that have been wont to guide him" be a more desirable ruler?

The implicit image of a cannier Cambyses is even more troubling: Darius with the soul of Cambyses. It might be that tyrannical inquiry is mitigated through the 'interested' experiments of Darius the shopkeeper or huckster (*kapēlos* 3.89). Taking Aristotle's view, the habits of opportunism would temper the tyrant's brutal curiosity. "A mode of securing tyranny is to make it more regal." (*Politics* 1314a30-31, edited) "Moreover, he himself in his personal character will be nobly disposed towards virtue, or at all events half-virtuous, and not base but only half-base." (Aristot. *Pol.* 1315b9-13, edited).

The Herodotean lesson seems rather that such an interested tyranny may extend indefinitely in space and time if there is insufficient care and agency to thwart its spread. The danger of Greek complacency toward the potential of their own tyrannical ethos is to the point. To credit Herodotus with a nascent vision of modern tyranny, as distinct from classical tyranny in the modern age might not over-state the case. (C.f. Roger Boesche, *Theories of Tyranny from Plato to Arendt* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996), 47, 163, 469-70.)

terms of being incorrect by the standards of maintaining Persian power. Rather than might making right, where right means just, in Cambyses' embodiment of tyrannical investigation royal might is correct because it corrects: by the conquest of opposing views and reality.

In addressing the cause more than the fact of Cambyses' madness, Herodotus constrasts the Egyptian with the Persian ethos as he considers their respective accounts (3.30). Herodotus points by his sceptical distance from the theological explanation towards the medical-rational (epilepsy). Although Herodotus seems to advance the medical account as his own, he allows for a third option, one left to us to consider. Cambyses emerges not as deranged but hyper-lucid.[19] The medical account is presented to show its inadequacy to disprove that Cambyses can still wield power. The standard of nature is insufficient, both to establish Cambyses' madness, and to dismiss his claim to power. At the height of his so-called madness, Cambyses transforms part of Persian virtue into the whole. That the Persians are mistaken about his character is proven by Cambyses' exact shot into the heart of his cup-bearer, the son of his most trusted Prexapses. Through his merging of power and inquiry, truth-telling becomes shooting well with arrows (3.35, 1.136).

In representing limits to tyrannical inquiry in a tragic mode, Herodotus gives resolution within the logos. Such shared catharsis, however, is marred by the implications for his audience: though Cambyses' lineage ends, the imperialist nomos goes on. Cambyses' experimentation discovers not limits in the world, such as nature, society or the gods, but the superficiality of his own self-understanding. Thus his failure is encompassed by the Persian

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19Munson, "Madness," 52-55; W. R. Connor, "The Histōr in History," in *Nomodeikes: Studies in Honor of Martin Oswald*, eds. R. M. Rosen and J. Farrell (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992), 13-14.

horizon and exacerbated by Cambyses' personal character. This character, in the broader scope of the *History*, is also corrigible. Cambyses emerges as an extreme, yet imperfect tyrant-*histōr*, one who acknowledges his imperfection while calling for his fellows to overcome it on his behalf. (3.65) Herodotus' Cambyses is a prelude to an investigator who does not appear within the *History*, unless it is in the person of Darius. (q.v. 3.88) The imperfection of Cambyses is based in his failures of self-knowledge. We see that such knowledge, rather than reform his soul away from tyrannical rule, would allow for the perfection of such rule, extending it unchecked into an ever-widening empire. Within the Persian horizon, such perfection seems practically impossible key features of the Persian character would have to be sacrificed to such a goal. Thus Herodotus leads us to consider the perfection of experiments on such a scale.

Despite having enlarged the empire modestly (3.43) Cambyses dies without heirs, and the first line of Persian kings ends with him: perhaps the greatest indictment in a hereditary monarchy (3.34). On the other hand, Herodotus shows the wisdom of which Cambyses is capable, placing in his mouth such Herodotean themes as the limits of human nature faced with fate, hasty rather than wise action, and the coincidence of misunderstanding and delusions of omnipotence. Youth and humour are ruinous, but not wholly blinding. The spiral that collapses ruling and investigation through experimentation ultimately destroys Cambyses, but not before he reclaims a sensibility never before presented in his story. His pronouncements are on par with those of a Solon.

Through Cambyses, Herodotus shows the Persian goal of mastering the world without the practical knowledge of one's own limits - knowledge that might allow the transcendence of

those limits. Cambyses learns too late, but he learns. What he knows surely about the nature of man and fate leads him to command his people to overcome. By reforming his deepest character, might his fortunes remain constant? In the end, Cambyses fails to prove better than his nature, but his example suggests a type that might. What prespective might do better at directed self-mastery and reform shown forth by different horizons of the world?[20]

The Free Scythians

Wacho mila ni mtumwa - Whoever leaves his culture is a slave. (Swahili)[21]

The integration of Herodotus' ethnography in Books 1-3 with his account of the Persian Wars in Books 5-9 is accomplished in Book 4. The elements of human affairs in the Scythian section emphasize the implications of open inquiry; Book 4 holds the *History* together both structurally and is pivotal in terms of the image of inquiry presented there.[22] The investigative paradigms that emerge through the Egyptian and Persian *logoi* are more restrictive than that which follows from Herodotus' inquiry into the Scythians. The Herodotean narrator is operating not only at the margins of human society, but also at the margins of knowable

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20Q.v Machiavelli, *Prince*, chs. 18, 25: pp. 63, 85-86. C.f. Michèle Giraudeau, *Notions juridiques et sociales chez Hérodote: étude sur le vocabulaire* (Paris: Diffusions Boccard, 1984), 131-32. Giraudeau integrates Herodotus' essentialism and relativism under the rubric, "the father of European humanism." (p.162) In presenting Herodotean individualism, however, he overstates Herodotus' confidence in human reason and thus Herodotus' belief in the moral clarity that is informed by history.

21Barry Pomeroy, ed. "African proverbs," available from <http://home.cc.umanitoba.ca/~pomeroy/2/writing/proverb.html>.

22Sidney Keith, "Herodotus: The First Political Scientist," (Ph.D. diss. University of Toronto, 1989), 198; Charles W. Fornara, *Herodotus; an Interpretive Essay* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), 32; Henry R. Immerwahr, *Form and Thought in Herodotus* (Cleveland: Western Reserve University Press, 1961), 106-107.

phenomena. Rather than establishing a model based on Scythian reticence, however, the inclusive, wide-ranging *logios-histōr* is informed by the Scythians' discovery of how to elude capture and their founding of a community. Looking outside his own horizon, Anacharsis gains much, living life fully, and then suffers death because he practices Greek ways. A splinter-group of Scythian men is finally persuaded to abandon its traditional camps and establish a new community with the Amazon women.

Language, as it unifies and separate the various peoples of the *History*, is conspicuous in the Scythian-Libyan *logos*. Even the remote, incomprehensible Garamantes of North Africa have a language, albeit like the squeaking of bats (4.183); the Man-eaters, a people without law or justice, also possess a language (4.106). The Scythians are the people who make the most extensive use of interpreters, conducting their trade in seven languages. (4.24) The significant adaptation that allows for the Scyths to wed the Amazons is the latter learning the Scyth language (4.114, 4.117) Language, the basic touchstone for Herodotus' human beings, is in evidence even at the margins of human society. Nomadism seems to be well-suited to exploring and learning from others. Where the ancient civilization of Egypt makes memorials in imitation of its sedimentary creation from the Nile, the youngest nation of the Scyths is a community still in its earliest, most energetic growth. Just as Psammetichus' linguistic experiment (2.2) has infant subjects, the Sauromatian 'social experiment' depends on the Scyths representing an original age of humanity. Despite the Scythian despise of foreign ways, there is a primordial fecundity and a cultural suppleness in the Herodotean primitive, which is

reflected in part by the Scyths' nomadism.[23] In his treatment of 'primitive' human communities and observances Herodotus characterizes a high-point of human youth and spiritedness commensurate with growth. As humans interact with and adapt to their surroundings (which include other peoples), language is a central intermediary.

Herodotus' treatment of the primitive, original human state centres on a symbolic response to the scarcity of mates and food. Herodotus' political economy of primitives, focussed on courtship and sexual intercourse, places human artistry and ingenuity at the forefront of the great deeds and wonders his *History* seeks to preserve.[24] The interplay between an environment and the customary practice of language as an art gives rise to human political community. Human imagination produces the poetic ability (*technē*) to represent the world through symbols and words. (4.2, 4.134).[25] The Scythian *logos* encompasses the idyllic transcending of national boundaries and the founding of Sauromatia, and the death of the individual Anacharsis who practices foreign ways (4.110-17, 4.76) . It is in this context of youth and ingenious growth that we find the Scythian *logos* teaching about inquiry through an exercise of freedom and an experiment in community genesis.

The Sauromatian experiment embodies a number of interesting ideas. (4.110-117) The initial impulse to fight yields to a cautious curiosity that in turn becomes an intimate trust.

23The vitality of Rousseau's noble savage appears indebted to Herodotus' primitives. Aristophanes' *Clouds* emphasizes the importance of youthfulness in the Thinkery's enterprise with contrasting images of wetness-suppleness and dryness-rigidity. C. S. Lewis', *The Magician's Nephew* recreates this over-ripeness in the genesis of Narnia. C.f. C. S. Lewis, *Miracles*, for a view of God who 'merely' creates the conditions for phenomena.

24Keith, 158.

25Keith, 153-54, 161. Overstepping established custom can bring horrified reactions or dire results, (e.g. Cambyses' outrages and the Callatian's outcry, 3.38).

Initially limited communication brings the two groups into close contact on a large scale, and the move to a common language enables them to stay together. The Scythians acknowledged that the Amazons could not be women like Scythian women, and they built on what they could share. Their common plundering lifestyle, having formed a similar character, allowed a new national ethos to emerge.

The Sauromatian nation was formed from the merging of the Scythians and Amazonians, and the story is a rare discussion of the founding of a new nation. The Scyths are portrayed earlier in juxtaposition to the civilized Egyptians. These two represent opposite poles of behaviour among the barbarians: peaceful people in a mild climate versus a wild way of life in a harsh region. The Scyths, nomadic primitives, have simple, immediate symbolism about their environment. These are the typical savages (c.f.: 4.106). They, however, have discovered the greatest thing for humans: freedom (4.110, *Skutheōn tōn eleutherōn*).

The Scyths encounter the Amazons, who also enjoy a nomadic way of life based on horse-riding hunting and raiding. Herodotus, however, shifts the earlier comparison, and the Scyths, once seen as relatively strange *vis à vis* the Egyptians or Greeks, become relatively intelligible in comparison to the Amazons. The Scyths were once unintelligible, now the Amazons appear to have strange ways. First the Scyths engage and fight with them. Seeing the Amazon dead up close, the Scyths discover that they are women. Knowing that one does not fight with women, but marries them hoping to have offspring, the Scyths leave off the battle. The Amazons too seem to have changed their appreciation for the Scyths, and they are open to sexual relations. It is the Amazons who contrive to increase the base of contact to include other Scyths. They invent a sign-language to communicate their desire. This sophistication not only

shows up the Scythian civilization, but also shows what ingenuity the primitive can bring to bear on a situation, here related to sexuality and procreation.

The Amazons learn the Scythian language for the latter cannot learn theirs.[26] The Amzonsare not, however, willing to change their way of life from hunting to the "women's tasks" such as the Scythian women do. This distinction between linguistic adaptation and manner of living is stressed subsequently by Herodotus; the Amazons' Scythian dialect deviates from the old language, since they never learned the Scyth language properly. The two groups can forge a new community by corrupting their old languages into a new, shared dialect. Although the men wish to go back to their old way of life, they are persuaded to retrieve their inheritances and settle a new land with their new partners. A certain brutality is preserved in the new society, where ritual killing is integral to future marriage arrangements. The Amazons' tenacity in their own ways is complemented by a desperate longing to leave the Scythian land they destroyed in pillaging.

The whole section has a feeling of a fairy tale: youths overcome strife and settle a new national in love, tolerance and mutual respect for difference. Albeit in a fantastic light, this tale presents in microcosm the formation a peaceful community from two warring spirits, and links linguistic and sexual intercourse as central to the process. Moreover, the willing abandonment of one's own customs in order to forge a new way emerges as a foil to the fate

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26The significance of this comparison is at least threefold. Herodotus is acknowledging the importance of women in the teaching of language at both family and societal levels. C.f. Scyles' Greek instruction by his mother (4.78), and the importance of learning Greek for both the Dodona priestesses (2.55) and for the Greeks themselves (1.58). Herodotus is also showing language as an ambivalent touchstone for nationality (4.23, 4.106, 4.108) to stress the shifting polarities of 'civilization.' Perhaps most simply, Herodotus is reiterating the Scyth cultural reticence, and their dependence on interpreters (4.24).

of Anacharsis. The final objection the Amazons make to the sedentary "women's work" of the Scythian women is that they never go anywhere. The Amazons can get along with the young Scyth men, but not the women. The Amazons stress the divergence of their customs from those of the Scyth women. Without the prior common practice of hunting and raiding, and the bond of sexual union, the new community could not have been born.

According to Herodotus, the people who surround the Euxine Sea, the Scyths' neighbours, are the "stupidest nations in the world." The Scythians are the sole clever nation among them. (4.46) Despite sharing a nomadic way of life with other peoples in the region, the Scythians alone have discovered the greatest thing in human affairs: "how no invader who comes against them can ever escape and how none can catch them if they do not wish to be caught." Singling out the Scyths and Anacharsis among them, for praise, Herodotus places his great wisdom (*sophiē pollēn*) in the context of their most clever discovery (*sophōtata exeurētai*). (4.46)

We confront the issue of what is Anacharsis' learning relative to the Scyths' great discovery, tempered as it is by their having been 'captured' by the Amazons. The freedom that the Scyths enjoy depends on their elusiveness and reticence. Their freedom, which they prize especially, is from the domination by others, and from this perspective they judge subservience harshly. (4.142) As a result of their abhorrence of the customs of others (4.76), something they share with the Egyptians (2.79) and even all humankind (3.38), the Scyths love freedom mainly as a strategic way of life, shown especially in their meetings with the Persians. Anacharsis' innovation is that his curiosity moves beyond a merely negative avoidance of domination by others to a considered submission to ways of life other than one's own. Is his

adoption as fully-considered as it could be? The Scyths' eventual failure to meet with the Persians is also a product of their way of life, and means that they cannot fully engage their foe in battle. (4.140) Their freedom is formulated as a "no." Anacharsis' murder affirms and preserves Scythian reticence. Anacharsis' great wisdom depends partially on his embracing of his people's ethos, and partially on his ability to step outside it with genuine openness to further insight. The weakness of the Scythian model is that while producing a man such as Anacharsis it fails to accommodate him or his wisdom.[27]

Despite their difficulty with the Amazon language, the Scyths are able to reason in speech. Their counsel on Darius' invasion (4.118-119) results in a clever plan, which, together with their spiritedness, results in a successful defeat of the Persian advance. The possibility and importance of such deliberation among Herodotus' more primitive and spirited peoples is crucial here, as is an appreciation of the peoples involved. Herodotus' playful use of ever-shifting polarities between civilized and barbarian is again shifted: to present the Scythians and their fellows as the former, and their near-distant neighbours as the latter.

In taking counsel, the Scyths will argue from a shared need for protection against Darius' imperialistic appetites, while those opposing an alliance will cast the debate in terms of legitimate retribution, for which the Scyths alone are responsible. While the Scyths serve as a primitive contrast to an (Athenian) Greek type of national character, and the Man-eaters (Androphagi) serve as a near-monstrous contrast to all civilization, here the barbarian peoples

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27Scyles also adopts foreign ways and suffers for it. He, however, was raised into the two traditions, and thus did not step out as did Anacharsis.

reflect positions that could be at home in an Athenian assembly.[28]

Although the Scythians are able to take counsel with their close neighbours, and thus formulate a strategy of resistance, they are, in the end, unable to think outside the limits of their own customs, (4.46) and cannot develop an understanding of the Persian 'other' equal to the task of full engagement. The strategy of avoidance, though in keeping with Scythian conventional wisdom, offers only limited military success.[29]

Concluding the chapter on the Scyth's greatest discovery (4.46), Herodotus asks how the Scythians, with their freedom-ensuring lifestyle, could "fail to be invincible and inaccessible for others." Some of them did not escape the Amazons, and all Scyths are accessible through the *apodexis* of our storykeeper. The Scyths might be not vanquished militarily, but accessed by the walkabout report of the *logios-histōr*. The possibility opened here is that there are 'conquests' other than military defeat.

The great value placed on remaining free by avoiding foreign conquest, however, does not translate into a domestic openness for inquiry, as shown by the fate the Scyths' lone wise man, Anacharsis, suffered at the hands of his fellows. The Scythians not only discovered the primacy in human affairs of sovereign freedom, but also produced a learned man: the only people in the region to do so. If the Scyth abhorrence of foreign customs is demonstrated by the incident with Anacharsis, for what wisdom could their learned man be remarkable?

28Stewart Flory, *The Archaic Smile of Herodotus* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1987), 23-24; François Hartog, *The Mirror of Herodotus: the representation of the other in the writing of history*, trans. Janet Lloyd (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 367-68; Keith, 196; Paavo Hohti, *The Interrelationship of Speech and Action in the Histories of Herodotus*, Commenationes Humanarum Litterarum 57 (Helsinki Helsingfors: Societas Scientarum Finnica, 1976), 39.

29Keith, 196; Hohti, *Interrelationship*, 39.

According to Herodotus, Anacharsis gained wisdom in the course of travelling and sight-seeing over much of the world. This kind of walkabout knowledge-seeking and reporting (*theōrēsas kai apodexamenos*) recalls that of the wise Solon, and Herodotus' own setting forth, *apodexis*. (1.29; 1.1) Solon's case, though echoed by Anacharsis' example, is instructively different. We shall see that Solon's sight-seeing (*theōriēs ekdēmēsas*) not only grounds his counsel to the Lydian Croesus and his Athenian law-making, but also enables him to avoid having to repeal any of the laws he sets down for Athens. Where Solon's walkabout is in part an escape from the demands of a typical Athenian legislator, Anacharsis' is, initially, consistent with the Scyth nomadism. And yet Anacharsis' walkabout is also a kind of escape. When we consider Solon further, as a Greek improvement on the Scythian Anacharsis, we should keep their relationship in mind: as demonstrative of that among all of the *History*'s seekers. Solon wandered outside his quarter, but his 'report' takes shape in greater detail for the *History*'s audience than Herodotus' representation of Anacharsis' showing forth.

Like Solon, then, Anacharsis had discovered a certain freedom, a freedom different from Scythian strategy: a provisional freedom from his own customs. Anacharsis' extra-national excursions take a turn from mere looking when he makes a pact with the goddess to ensure his safe return home. He embraces Greek rites in exchange for his safe return. The image of a wise man going too far takes shape when Anacharsis supposes that his life is at stake, and crosses the line of faith, piety and religious observances.

Having made a vow to the Cyzicenes' Mother of the Gods that he would establish her rite if he returned home safely, Anacharsis donned the images of Cybele and celebrated the rituals with exactness in a remote quarter in his homeland. This retreat demonstrates that he

knows the danger of what he is about to do. Some Scyth men discover him, even in this wooded area, and report him to the king. After the Scythian king learned of this, he went to see for himself, found Anacharsis and shot him dead on the spot with an arrow. All Scythians, except Herodotus' source it seems, pretend ignorance of Anacharsis whenever his name is mentioned thereafter, because he went to Greece and adopted foreign customs.

The silent treatment of Anacharsis, had Herodotus not ferreted out this story, would have been devastating, worse even than Cambyses' fate of having no progeny. The full horror of the Scyth king's ultimate solution to Anacharsis' transgression would have been not only to execute him, but to remove his memory from existence, to expedite and assure the effects that elapsing time threatens. Thus we have the Herodotean narrator's role returning to marry the Egyptian and Scythian *logoi* in the importance of memory. The Herodotean narrator is also emphasizing the story of Anacharsis by naming his source individually. Through Deputy Tymnes Herodotus is able to learn the kinship of Saulius the king and the noble Anacharsis to uncover not only the slaying of a wise man, but also a fratricide. Herodotus' language is particularly strange and striking, "So, if Anacharsis is of this descent, he should know that he was killed by his own brother!" On the one hand, he qualifies Tymnes' report with the "if," and yet emphatsizes that the slain Anacharsis should know, even in death, that his murder was an offense greater than simply royal retribution for being *philōbarbaros*.

Anacharsis' overcoming of his fellows' reticence is the core of his wisdom, a wisdom that the Scyths are unable to appreciate let alone adopt or exploit to their advantage. The parallel with Herodotus is both striking and instructive. Although the two are not identical, the praise "learned man" is choice indeed, especially for a man who ignored his own custom of

extreme prejudice. How is this consistent with the wisdom of a learned man? Anacharsis' precaution of choosing a remote location, was insufficient to preserve his life in his foreign observances.

Part of the wisdom gained by travel in addition to an appreciation for other customs, may be an increased respect for some of those customs that one left at home. It is in order to regain his homeland that Anacharsis vows to keep the Cybelean faith once home. Anacharsis' predicament *vis à vis* his fellows might have been avoided had he not adopted the foreign ways that he saw while travelling. Although Herodotus sometimes criticizes, sometimes praises the practices of others, he does not suggest adopting them. As with the Scythians as a whole, having singular insight but no comprehensive wisdom, Anacharsis' discoveries do not grant him the broader sense to dutifully observe his own practice of despising the customs of others. The story, by presenting two extremes of behaviour, begs mediation between swift death to foreign observances and zealous practice of another religion.

Perhaps here is where Anacharsis' wisdom lay before he took to the Cybelean rites in earnest. If his case matches the Scythian example, it is a certain freedom that merits praise. Where the Scyths were free from subjugation by outside powers, Anacharsis was freed from his own customary horizon. We see in his foreign observances the problem of too great an openness to other customs. In Anacharsis' case, it was the Mother of the Gods that he worshipped; he might seem to have thus relinquished any inquisitive distance for investigation and judgement. To retain such impartiality might have been preferable to Saulias. To surrender one's own customs sufficiently to embrace fully others' is to invite the problem of being adrift of convention, having no place from which to view the world. Nomads in particular, since

they have no cities, must be ever vigilant in order to preserve their customary horizons. From Saulias' point of view, Anacharsis may be wise, but cannot be invested in another tradition. Anacharsis adoption, however, must also be squared with his learning from Herodotus' point of view. The distinction is between embracing foreign ways without due consideration of their merits, comparison with one's own with the view to the best observances, and the provisional character of the *logos*, in which stories vie for their due. There is in the *logos*, the laying that gathers, an equality of versions and possibilities that endorses none and excludes none. The comparison in speech enables a freedom from one's own conventional biases enough to gain a critical perspective that is precluded by whole-hearted indulgence in either familiar or unfamiliar customs. It is this level of wisdom that is praiseworthy: Anacharsis' freedom from his own in an investigative sense.

This openness, though primarily dedicated to inquiry, is able to give some ground to adaptive adoptions of foreign ways.[30] As the Scyth Anacharsis' experience shows, political freedom and freedom of inquiry have their roots in an adventure, but are not necessarily compatible. Both the Scyths and Herodotus must acknowledge Anacharsis' wisdom. When political or intellectual freedom is exaggerated into a constant movement, either in nomadism or in a radical relativism, it suffers. It seems that Herodotus leads us to imagine a type, an Anacharsis who might survive, that incorporates the Scythian wisdom, with further refinements of national character and the seeker's enterprise.[31] Freedom of inquiry is a bar-

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30James Redfield, "Herodotus the Tourist," *Classical Philology* 80 (1985), 115-16.

31C.f. Keith, 180-81.We should ask if the wise can extend his people's cultural vision without recourse to others' traditions. Herodotus' view seems to stress an interpenetration of values of such a degree as to make customs and ideas shared human 'property.' 'Foreign' influence in this case is mainly that which provides a critical

none adventure within the restraints necessary to sustainable political community. In the *History*, Herodotus shows both ways; he suggests the success of exercising restraint with a figure destroyed by too great a longing for freedom. That Anacharsis is killed is a Scythian, not an Herodotean objection to the scope of his inquiry and learning.

The Greek type is held up overtly here by Herodotus in his reporting of the Greek version of Anacharsis' adventures: he was sent by the Scyth king to learn the ways of Greece. Herodotus dismisses this as a "vain tale" of the Greeks themselves. The Greeks share both shortcomings and wisdom with the barbarians; if the Greeks themselves sent a learner of foreign ways among the barbarians, he might serve as an exemplary synthesis of diverse types and wisdom. Because they are "overrestless for any kind of learning," the Greeks as much as Anacharsis need the discretion of Spartans (*sōphronōs*) in speaking and listening (4.77, c.f. 3.46 laconic authorities). This discretion is to be exercised in the constitution of the Greek, and is defined by the relationships of similarity or difference with each 'other.' Greek identity is formed out of a critical meshing of these various aspects. Reverence for an elaborate tradition and history (Egyptian) is tempered with the vigour of a young nation (Scythian). Simple, primitive symbolism (Scythian) is informed by ancient written records (Egyptian) and rationalism (Persian). What characterizes the Greek ethos in the *History*, is not simply a diverse patchwork of customs, but a complex interconnection and distillation of diverse sorts of wisdom.[32]

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perspective on the habitual, and challenges tradition to defend itself.

32Donald Lateiner, *The Historical Method of Herodotus* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989), 157.

Poets, priests and politicians

> So that all the days of a man's life are twenty-six thousand two-hundred and fifty; of all those days not one brings to him anything exactly the same as another. So, Croesus, man is entirely what befalls him. (Hdt. 1.32, Solon speaks)

Anacharsis' supplement to Egyptian memory and Persian rationalism is the type of walkabout knowledge-seeking and reporting that leads us to the wise Athenian Solon in the context of Herodotus' own *apodexis*. (1.29; c.f. 1.1) The evolution of the national seeker we have been developing is a simplified presentation of the shifting comparative polarities Herodotus uses in his interwoven stories. This organizational artifice is loosely modelled on Benardete's chapters 2-5, in which he presents the national "ways of erring" (*nomoi*) that are encompassed and comprehended by Herodotus' *logos*.[1] Our inquiry also imagines the *nomoi* as national ways of seeking: ideational tools that inform Herodotus' own project. As discussed previously, Benardete ignores the shaded values of Herodotean polarities; for Herodotus, 'other than our way' is neither an absolute, nor necessarily an objection.

Solon's case is instructively different from that of Anacharsis because Solon's sight-seeing travels allow him to set forth his wisdom in a form that preserves the Athenian horizon, on the one hand, and, on the other, does not destroy that of the Lydian Croesus. Initially, Croesus' arrogance is checked by Solon's account of happiness, but is not destroyed. Solon allows the king his fortune, his hubris and his twenty-seven thousand days. Perhaps mischievously, perhaps earnestly, Solon takes Croesus at his seeker's word, whose longing to ask overcomes him, in this case about the most blessed of men (1.30). Solon proceeds as

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1Seth Benardete, *Herodotean Inquiries* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1970), 68.

though Croesus at court is also a seeker of knowledge, whose curiosity can be roused to further questioning. (1.31) Solon neither flatters the Lydian king, nor recants under the stern reminder that he is a guest-friend (*xenos*) of the king. Solon retains his equanimity, considering the many different fortunes to which he is witness as all part of the human condition. (1.32) The Lydian monarch's entreaty for flattery cannot unseat the wisdom gained in wandering beyond the royal palace and its treasure stores.[2]

The wisdom necessary to establish Athenian laws originates in the tourism that allows Solon to escape from the possible demands of the Athenian citizens; he avoided having to repeal laws by absenting himself in travels. If Solon is a Greek improvement on the Scythian Anacharsis, and a kind of distillation of the national seekers, then the relationship between the curious and their community remains of central importance. Foremost among Herodotus' concerns are how the insight of the seeker is manifest in the community, and how the community's beliefs and knowledge are articulated, supported and challenged by seekers' adventures in learning.

What Herodotus has learned from the named sources at Dodona is presented in the dense context of the origins of the Greeks and their gods. In the shared names, shapes and attributes of the gods we see the relationships among mortals, the divine and both these relationships' role in the growth and transmission of Greek culture from its Egyptian, though not only Egyptian, antecedents. (1.58)

2The ruler and wise advisor conversation proves endlessly fascinating to students of philosophy and politics precisely because it animates the practical limits of advice, and the underlying, "fundamental question of the relation between theory and practice, or knowledge and virtue." Leo Strauss, "The Title and the Form [of Xenophon's *Hiero or Tyrannicus*]," in *On Tyranny*, eds. Victor Gourevitch and Michael S. Roth (New York: The Free Press, 1991), 34. Richard Lattimore, "The Wise advisor in Herodotus." *Classical Philology* 34 (1939), 24.

The nameless 'disposer gods' (*thēoi, tithēmi*) that the Pelasgians first worshipped acquired names that come from Egypt. This adoption, after a long time in their old mode was confirmed by the "most ancient oracular place of all among the Greeks" at Dodona (2.52). Herodotus names his sources there individually. (2.55) The gods' names according to Homer and Hesiod, next discussed, are of a much later vintage. Until "the day before yesterday," in relation to their gods at least, the Greeks were properly counted as Pelasgians. Greeks as Greeks proper came into being only once the great Greek poets incorporate these foreign gods into the Greek tradition. By telling the birth of the gods they create, in poetry, an all-important distinction between the Greek and non-Greek. This distinction, however, as we often see in Herodotus is not merely a definition, a setting of absolute limits, but a nuance, a shading through various interpenetrating values.

The Pelasgians seek to model their gods' names on barbarian (Egyptian) names; Homer and Hesiod provide the Greeks with theirs. Herodotus is present here in a particularly intrusive narrator mode, articulating his sources, either the Egyptian priests, Dodona priestesses or his own judgement. The accounts of poets and priests are present before us in their complex interrelations. Herodotus presents the slave trade in the Egyptian priests' story of the two women who would become the prophetesses at Dodona. The Egyptians understand the events as rape by the Phoenicians followed by exchange. Herodotus intrudes forcefully here to demand authentication of these events, but without success. (2.54) The priests seem to suffer similar problems in their 'furthest inquiries' as does Herodotus in his. They later learned what they do tell of these Theban women, but Herodotus seems dismissive in the beginning of the next section of his account, one that most concerns us. (2.55) It is not that Herodotus prefers

what he hears from the Dodona priestesses, though his individual naming of them does stress their account; it is that, without their story, the story from the Egyptians would be incomplete – in a crucially important way.

In brief, this story is Herodotus' exposition, in a difficult context of exotic stories slightly removed from his contemporary audience, of the process he attributes to Homer and Hesiod: providing Greeks with their theogony. According to Herodotus, the Egyptian priests said thus, but the more interesting, and ultimately telling story is told by the Dodona priestesses. It is this story he grounds in named sources, but the very problem of the origin, meaning and transmission of sacred names is at issue. It would be possible to discount the suggestion that individual names make this story stand out, particularly in the larger context of the troublesome features of the relationships between gods, names and the characteristics of those gods encompassed by their names. It seems more plausible, given that the Dodona priestesses have both a generic name that ties them to the shrine and each other as prophets ("doves"), and individual names that allow Herodotus to distinguish them by age (eldest to youngest: Promenia, Timarete and Nicandra), that we are invited here to investigate the generic-particular problem of naming: a naming that permits unification and distinction, and gives roots to mystical, ephemeral phenomena. The priestesses' names too are suggestive of characteristics based on each age from eldest to youngest: "Prophesying," "Virtue-honouring," and "Man(liness)-conquering." The possible "seven ages of man" are collapsed into three ages of women, two of which seem concerned with manly things.[3]

3Herodotus' aretē is properly "valour," possible in either gender but most in evidence by men in battle (1.176, 8.92, 9.40), or the "excellence" of animals and fertility of lands (3.88, 4.198, 7.5). The character of Promenia, as the most mature woman, suggests a progression away from the things of men to the mystic access of the

While the 'fantastic' tale is grounded in named sources, the more reasonable account is troubled with source-questions, raised by Herodotus, and at best is only partially endorsed by him. He then intervenes to solve the puzzle with his judgement, and begins with an 'if'. (2.56) Thus bracketing the Egyptian priests' account Herodotus makes the judgement he develops from their story also somewhat provisional. The slave-priestess who ends up in Dodona, having come from the shrine of Theban Zeus in Egypt, sets up a memorial in her new home. Following her mastery of the Greek language, she could begin prophecy. Herodotus' attention to the issue of translation, at stake in the whole story of the gods' names and origins, and here in microcosm, begins the second part of his judgement; this part incorporates the fantastic tale of the miraculous speaking doves, as reported by the priestesses and other shrine attendants.

The shift crucial for the priestesses and their supplicants is from the mysterious and unknown alterity of the barbarian language to the comprehensibility of the Greek language. Comprehensibility should not be confused with clarity, for prophecies are notoriously ambiguous, and thus ripe with meanings. Like the phenomena under investigation here, they require interpretation in a broad sense to make sense.[4]

The priestesses tell of two black doves that came out of Egyptian Thebes who, miraculously speaking with a human voice, established a shrine at Dodona. (2.55) Herodotus gives us an interpretation: two black women, were brought from Thebes speaking a barbarian

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crone.

4"The French word interprète concentrates all the relevant values." Actors, musicians and engaged critics are thus "life-giving performers" who give language "life beyond the moment and place of immediate utterance or transcription." George Steiner *Beyond Babel*, 2nd. ed. (Oxford University Press, 1992), 28. On ancient Greek historiography q.v. 156-157, 165-166; on "translating" Herodotus, 353. C.f. Grene, Introduction to Herodotus *History*, 31-32.

language. Upon learning Greek and thus becoming intelligible, they began to prophecy to the locals and visitors. (2.57) The parallel mapping of the barbarian (*barbaros*, non-Greek) onto the bird-animal and non-human, and the Greek onto the human is especially interesting, particularly in light of the intimacy of Greeks' kinship with the non-Greek in these stories, and those related to the development of the Hellenes from their Pelasgian origins (1.57-58).

At the level of our interpretive attitude, we have here the necessary corollary to the Herodotean Homer Keith develops. Not only must we work critically 'back' from the general poetry to the detailed particularity, but we must also move creatively forward from fact to fantasy, as do the Dodona priestesses, as do Homer and Hesiod. It is this 'two-way' motion that is essential to an appreciation of human inventiveness.[5] Although the spatial metaphor of linear motion is limited, we find the directions of understanding in operation like the equilibrium of a chemical equation; expressed in linear fashion to characterize an oscillation. The simultaneous static and active dynamic of interpenetration, between distilling facts from fantasy and investing events with mystery, is preserved in the model of equilibrium. Herodotus may have this in mind earlier when he promises experiential knowledge and clarity from initiation into the Samothracian mysteries. (2.51)[6]

These 'mysteries' also prove irresistible to Grene, and although he cannot resist this

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5Steiner, 166. On Thucydidean narrative, Steiner says "The pattern is one of reciprocal 'triggering' and actualization." He seems, however, to be grouping Herodotus and Thucydides in this characterization, distinct from a Hebraic-Biblical tradition of action-narrating strategies.

6The doorman/student Strepsiades meets at Socrates' Thinkery says, "You must believe these things are mysteries." Aristophanes *Clouds* 143. West's note suggests c.f. Plato *Symposium* 209e-212a, and *Phaedrus* 250c-d. In the Herodotean context, we understand in *Phaedrus* 250b-c the importance of the relationships among "the most blessed of mysteries," the "former time" and the "honor of memory." Where the Phaedrus addresses an abstract time other than this life, the History articulates an evolution from a past within 'living memory,' i.e. memory being made to live.

tale either, he distances himself from its apparent comfort with the mysterious. He identifies as Herodotus' contribution to our understanding the discovery of the mistake that led to the story. As we discussed, Herodotus' clarifications are often nothing of the kind. What Grene calls confusion over the appellation 'doves' is not a mistake.[7] Herodotus presents his addition in order to be present in the story. Herodotus is not so much correcting the priestesses' story as showing how the translation of the actual into the divine and vice versa occurs in the context of the birth of the gods.

Herodotus' named sources are priestesses who represent the dynamics of poetic invention in god-naming, prophecy and interpreting the mysterious. Herodotus anticipates this reading of Homer (Hdt. 2.113-116) with a supplementary attitude towards the purpose and art of his account. Herodotus deserves Aristotle's rebuke, *muthologos*, because he attends to the act of mythmaking, and the essential role in it of interpretation.[8] Grene notes precisely Herodotus' concern with the power of naming in the creation, transmission and translation of the divine thing. For Herodotus, given that two black women who came out of Africa to found temples at Libya and Dodona, it is an act of living poetry, not a mistake, to tell a story about talking doves. By emphasizing the 'rejection' of magic, however, Grene misses Herodotus' suggestion as to precisely how a dove speaks with a human voice: she is a transfigured human, named 'dove' and thus simultaneously both.

The relationships Herodotus outlines between the languages of the Pelasgians and Greeks, their origins and the attendant success and failure of each as a community, are

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7Grene, footnote #27 to Hdt. 2.56, *History*, 156.

8Aristotle *On the Generation of Animals* 756^{b}6. 'Muthologos,' teller of legends, romancer.

frustratingly vague. The care with which we must proceed when our author seems to be speaking plainly must be redoubled when his language is as qualified as it is in these chapters. Phrases such as "I cannot say exactly," and "if I should speak," or "if one may judge" alert us to Herodotus as a reporter distancing himself from his sources and from his audience by qualifying with such provisos any conclusions to be drawn.

From the earliest times, according to Herodotus, the Pelasgians were fellow-dwellers with the Athenians in Attica, but spoke "a non-Greek language." (1.57) This furthers exemplifies Herodotus' use of *barbaros* to mean particularly "non-Greek" others without pejorative connotation. (C.f. 8.135.3 *glōssa barbarōi*.) With the addition of "same-language-speakers" the shared language of Creston and Placia is distinguished from that of their neighbours. (1.57) These nuanced distinctions represent the complexity of Herodotus' account of language and its connection to community and knowledge-seekers.

Herodotus continues, "If all this stock was truly Pelasgian, the Attic race, being itself Pelasgian, must also have changed its language when it became one with the Greeks." Even Grene's helpful footnote cannot dispel fully the difficulties in these passages:

> This is all rather confusing. Clearly Herodotus is saying something arresting and, I think, not very palatable to his hearers. He apparently accepts a common belief that the earliest stock (perhaps in all Greece) were "Pelasgians."
>
> What is curious, however, is that he now says that the Attic race was Pelasgian, whereas a few lines earlier he had said the Pelasgians were only part of the Athenian community - the prehistoric part.[9]

Herodotus' presentation is confusing and suggestive. This first account of the

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9Grene, footnote #26 to Hdt. 1.57, *History*, 57.

relationship between language and political community informs our reading of the genesis of such a community in Greece. Even as we fail to piece through precisely the convoluted path of origins set before us, Herodotus' audience hears that Greeks were once barbarians - in their speech. In addition to introducing an important theme for his account, that of the origins of Greek customs and ultimately the superiority of the properly Greek type, Herodotus qualifies his initial praise of the Greeks' wisdom by telling of how they were duped with a "most simple-minded trick." If Herodotus earnestly describes the Greek stock as "distinguished from the barbarians for its cleverness" since the "most ancient times," (1.60) as is Benardete's judgement, then the muddled relationships emphasize the spectrum of Greek-to-barbarian in point of wisdom and greatness. Herodotus continues with his own judgement:

> The Greek stock, ever since it was, has always used the Greek language. But though its was weak when it split off from the Pelasgians, it has grown from something small to be a multitude of peoples by the accretion chiefly of the Pelasgians but of many other barbarian peoples as well. (1.58)

Here, at the genesis point of Greece, we have the first hint of what is perhaps the compass of his presocratic wisdom, by which the Greeks learned "to organize the chaos of foreign, Semitic, Babylonian, Lydian, Egyptian forms and ideas," and be "no mere aggregate" of disjointed diversity, but rather a integral community possessed of true culture.[10]

> It seems to me, the Pelasgian people, so long as it spoke a language other than Greek, never grew great anywhere. (1.58)

In Herodotus' account of the beginnings of Greek cultural accretion (*suchnōn*), in

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10Friedrich Nietzsche, "On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life," in *Untimely Meditations*, trans. R. J. Holingdale. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), [s. 10] 122.

which language is given prominence, we see the privileged notion and explanatory point of reference that becomes the centrepiece of his working through of Greek superiority: their transformed speech. Herodotus "is quite explicit that it is not any ethnicity that made for the significant difference in the growth and success but the use of Greek."[11]

The openness of Herodotus' account of free investigative speech is grounded in the organic metaphor suggested by accretion. The relationship Herodotus outlines here, between the Pelasgian and Greek languages, and the attendant success or failure of each as a community, is frustratingly vague. Herodotus' presentation is suggestive, and demands our attention, since it is the first account of the relationship between language and political community, and that which will round out our understanding of Herodotus' account of speech and its relationship to knowledge-seeking and political freedom.[12]

All this sets up the place of Solon's wisdom as a seeker in the Greek mode, not only of inquiry and setting forth, but of subsequent access to such knowledge. Solon's insights do not engage Croesus in their conversation. (1.30) Solon's lesson is revived when Croesus' mute son speaks, and thus allows Croesus to come to a fuller understanding of how Solon's account of happiness matches Croesus' own experience. Herodotus' mention of intermediaries further suggests the potential degradation of Solon's wisdom through transmission to the king. (1.85-86)

Cyrus' interrogation of Croesus is the first instance of the direct mention of interpreters

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11Grene, footnote #27 to Hdt. 1.57, *History*, 57.

12Freedom is essential to Nietzsche's presentation of Greek culture as transfigured phusis. Friedrich Nietzsche, "Schopenhauer as Educator [i.e. liberator]." In *Untimely Meditations*, trans. R. J. Holingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 145-146. C.f. ibid 177-178, 182, and Nietzsche, "Uses," [s. 10] 123.

assisting translation. This sets the tone for all those that follow in the *History*, and all those that have preceded in our investigation. Despite being in the context of a Persian-style investigation, the teachings of Solon are represented in the broadest context for understanding the seeker in the *History*.

When the Persians were taking the Lydian's fortress, a Persian soldier, who did not know Croesus was the Lydian king, was about to kill him, Croesus having resigned himself to his miserable fate. Suspending this execution, however is the voice of Croesus' birth-mute son. Unable to speak up to that point, the threat of his father's death drives him to speak his first words: "Sir, it is Croesus, do not kill him." This identification saves Croesus because of the soldiers' orders to spare him (1.80). The boy, who was "quite undone as he was deaf and dumb" (1.34), becomes his father's saviour, and remains ever after able to speak. To a degree, his son's deaf-muteness stresses Croesus' own initial deafness to Solon's wisdom, and his own overcoming of his muteness at his death.

After Cyrus set Croesus, his prisoner, on a pyre to burn, the Lydian ruler cries out, invoking his confidant and teacher, Solon. The Persian king asked his interpreters what his victim was calling out. Pursuing this further, Cyrus forces an explanation from the reticent Croesus, and is privy to the Lydian's realization of Solon's wisdom about the fate of the great. (1.86) The small addition of the interpreters' presence adds a nuance that could have very easily been left aside. Like Cambyses' Persian-style experiments, Cyrus was conducting a presumptuous, disdainful and horrific investigation, with the divine in mocking question. Cyrus must have Croesus' version of Solon's wisdom through his intermediaries, who must, in turn, put questions to Croesus to uncover the meaning in his own obscure statement about

Solon: "One whom I would have every ruler meet," followed by the highlights of Solon's discourse on blessedness and happiness. (1.30)[13] Part of this re-articulation of Solon's wisdom is the varied use and application of the terms of blessedness. As Grene notes and attempts to preserve in his translation, Herodotus is no philosopher "using term to fix a definition" but rather a "conversationalist" operating within the range of common usage and exploiting its subtle differences and ambiguities.

The desired object of human life does not appear to be the wisdom of Solon or Croesus in his epiphany or even Cyrus as he recognizes a shared humanity with his prisoner and orders him saved from the pyre's flames. If the *olbios-eudaimonia-eutuchia* spectrum gives only limited place to knowledge, it does provide for a kind of revelation and identification. Croesus says that he would rather other rulers converse with Solon than to have a fortune himself.[14] Cyrus recognizes Croesus as having had fortune as great as his (Herodotus' *eudaimonia*), and thus sees their kinship. Neither of them, however, sense the seeking aspect of Solon's travels "in pursuit of knowledge" (*philosopheōn* 1.30). Doubly ironic, it is at Croesus' lowest point, when he has only narrowly escaped burning by the divine favour (*theophilēs*) for which Cyrus was testing him, that the Persian king realizes Croesus' favoured position. Only once utterly undone and resigned to die in slavery is Croesus an image from which Cyrus can learn what might befall him.

13Q.v. Grene, footnote #19 to Hdt. 1.32, *History*, 47; Grene, endnote, 665-666. Olbios is rendered as blessedness, eudaimonia as happiness, and eutuchia as lucky.

14A. D. Godley has Croesus willing to part with riches to this end, "I would have given much wealth..." Herodotus. *Herodotus*. trans. A. D. Godley, 4 vols. Loeb Classical Library. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1926).

In the Croesus-Cyrus *logos*, the issues of restricted and free speech are manifest in a particularly interesting way. Despite Croesus' assumption of his own slave status, Cyrus identifies with him to such a degree that he pities his defeated fellow ruler. The frankness of Solon, who did not flatter Croesus, is repeated in Croesus' own freedom to speak to Cyrus, however the Lydian-Persian political relationship is described. Realizing that Solon was wise, even without fully grasping the scope of his wisdom, entitles Croesus to be heard by Cyrus.[15]

The Solon story is studied extensively. It is often supposed that Herodotus himself speaks most directly in Solon's voice. Croesus' use of the word *philosopheōn* is particularly irresistible to students of classical political philosophy. Even if Herodotus does speak more directly through Solon, what is in evidence here is the fact that the lesson is re-presented as a re-presentation. To have influence, Solon's walkabout inquiries must also walk about and be transmitted through others, even the most sceptical others. This is the true potential of open deliberation. Insularity threatens inquiry as much as an overly imperial paradigm of knowledge-seeking. 'Corruption' of the teaching is based on the possibility of an untransmitted account. Without access to an account without intermediaries, the influence of Solon's knowledge-seeking will be a limited, compromised wisdom. Even in Croesus' re-articulation, the seeker core of Solon's looking beyond his quarter is lost. The ambiguity of what he would have other rulers learn in conversation with Solon reflects the problem of falsification in such open inquiry. It is in allowing for an actualization of non-Greek knowledge that this paradigm of investigation marks the Athenian innovation of isegoria.

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15 Paavo Hohti, "Freedom of Speech in Speech Sections in the Histories of Herodotus," *Arctos* 8 (1974), 20.

> It is not only in respect of one thing but of everything that equality and free speech are clearly a good; take the case of Athens, which under that rule of princes proved not better than any of her neighbours but, once rid of those princes, was far the first of all. (5.78)

The Athenians can prosper neither by simply adopting nor by rejecting the despotic models of their Mediterranean neighbours. The *apodexis* of an *historiēs logon* is an *isegoria* of *nomizein*; the performance of an investigative account is the free and equal speaking of beliefs. Not simply confined to the assembly, where alternative proposals vie for approval, we find Herodotus' free and equal speech encompassing cultural preferences and rankings of values. Just as "stories told about an incident each have an equal right to be collected whatever [Herodotus'] personal opinions," there is a provisional possibility of learning from the many *nomoi* represented in the *History*.[16] To fix on the political in practice or in inquiry as simply that which attends to the *polis*, is to neglect the greater scope of phenomena upon which hang the fearless deliberations of the citizens' proposals. Herodotus extends the freedom principle of Athens to encompass the known world in his inquiries. Herodotus' *nomizotics*, by attending to the modes of the *politeia*, gives a comprehensive historical if not philosophical perspective. By extending this principle to the broader world from the workings of freedom in Athenian political speech actions, Herodotus pretends to philosophy as walkabout knowledge-seeking. It remains historical because it remains grounded in the interrelated and contingent realm of phenomena as articulated in the stories of each community and as investigated by their distinctive seekers. Herodotus encompasses all of these seekers with his predilection to speak freely in his setting forth. (c.f. 8.73)

16Hohti, "Freedom of Speech," 19. Herodotus envisions a 'Greece' that can produce and allow for this perspective.

An interest solely in the deliberative speeches, to the neglect of Herodotus' broader investigative enterprise, does little to support the notion that "freedom of speech [*isegoria*] is the greatest point of affinity between [Herodotus'] own character and the way of life fostered by free government."[17] Herodotus' *logios-histōr* personae, as informed by the various images of the seeker in the national *nomoi*. represent this affinity. The provisional equality of alternative versions of an account or proposal for action depends on their yet-to-be-decided nature. It is in the context of investigation that such proposals meet and mete out their mutual challenges. The *History* is an ancient "Battle of the Books," or rather a battle of ways of life and of living inquiry. (c.f. 2.105) In the arena of free and equal speech, shared ignorance and scepticism allow stories to win through: their aphoristic qualities keep them ripe and rich for Herodotus' audiences.

> [Herodotus'] Greeks are indeed superior to the extent that they mirror (however imperfectly) Herodotus' own receptiveness to the wisdom of non-Greeks. While the narrative worlds of both the Persians and the Egyptians are closed, that of the Greeks is (somewhat) open.[18]

Herodotus' *apodexis* is heard simultaneously and differently by the wise, the vulgar and everyone in progress. The *History*'s appropriate lessons exist in its reception and re-interpretation by an audience. It is not beyond interpretation, and thus debased or falsified by its adaptation into the concrete, material world.[19] It rather positions itself as part of, and a

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17Keith, 240.

18Clifford Orwin, review of *Herodotus and the Origins of Political Community*, by Norma Thompson, *American Political Science Review* 90:4 (December 1996), 900.

19 Alexander Kojève, "Tyranny and Wisdom," in *On Tyranny*, eds. Victor Gourevitch and Michael S. Roth (New York: The Free Press, 1991), 176.

place where, what can be known about the world is laid and gathered. By existing simultaneously in literary and non-literary genres the *History* allows multiple engagements, and invites rethinking about how inquiry or reading invests phenomena with meaning. Its condition as a participant and place of interpretation provides the inherent multiplicity of its discourse and challenges pretences to objectivity.

Self-consciously traditional, Herodotus is more than simplistically traditional, but not entirely philosophic, and in a way slightly misologic, from a dialectic, elenchic view-point. The rejection of nature as a standard is not only an artifact of a particular aspect of modernity, but is also a relic of presocratic historiography.[20]

As deserving as Herodotus is of Aristotle's ire and polemic energy (as Thompson suggests), the "poetic historian" is of interest to (late) moderns questioning the separation of story and science. If, from the viewpoint of classical political philosophy Aristotle "defeated" Herodotus, addressing the poetics of knowledge-seeking mitigates an overemphasis of objectivity in Herodotus, and supplements constitutive story-telling in the formation and preservation of political identity. It is only through the experience of performing and engaging his *logos* that the complex reality of phenomena - wondrous human deeds and suffering - can be properly preserved. Like *nomos*, which slows the ravages of natural decay, history as poetry thwarts nature by allowing custom to be reformed in an open milieu, and thus win

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20Leo Strauss, "The origin of the idea of natural right," *Natural Right and History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953), 96. C.f. "What is Political Philosophy," in *What is Political Philosophy* (Glencoe, Il.: The Free Press, 1959). The cast of "The Modern Solutions" (pp.40-55), Machiavelli, Rousseau and Nietzsche, is especially instructive to students of Herodotean history. A contrasting modern account is Hobbes on (e.g.) good wit and good judgement. Hobbes demands good manners and preserves the Aristotelian distinctions between history and poetry. The notion that the public "jingling of words" will only be "accounted folly" places moderns in the Anglo-American tradition at a disadvantage in Herodotean inquiries. Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. Michael Oakeshott (New York: Collier Books, 1962), 59-60.

through. Herodotus reminds his audience, however, that inquisitive openness is only a beginning with tyrannical potential, and, ultimately, that anything may happen (4.195). Just as knowledge without openness is disastrous, openness without knowledge is cultural chaos; to achieve "order without oppression and freedom without license," the solution is education.[21] Beyond the narrow scope of merely an alternative doxology the *History*'s openness to re-reading is its only defense against time, and its only source of intellectual legitimacy. Herodotus' *History* is not an untroubled monument, but it endures. Herodotus' own scepticism is qualified, and even so only partially, by the fact of the opus that has fallen to us, and that his own work has been saved from ignomy.

21Leo Strauss, *Persecution and the Art of Writing* (Glencoe, Il.: The Free Press. 1952), 37.

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